THE NEW AFGHAN DAWN

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PROLEGOMENON :

"Where the mind is without fear and the
head is held high,
Where knowledge is free,
Where the world has not been broken
up into fragments by narrow domestic walls,
Where words come out from the depth
of truth,
Where tireless striving stretches its arms
towards perfection,
Where the clear stream of reason has
not lost its way into the dreary desert
sand of dead habit,
Where the mind is led forward by thee
into ever-widening thought and action -
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father,
let my country awake "

- GITANJALI

Afghanistan, known as Ariana in days of yore and Khorasan, the land of the rising sun, in later years, has been the ancient cradle of diverse cultures and the sombre theatre of armed adventures Ages of medieval slumber, disturbed occasionally by invasions of these frozen mountain tribes, have helped preserve old customs and primitve traditions The Hindu Kush has nourished a proud, peaceful, patriotic people of rock hard hardiness but history has not done them that developmental, democratic justice for which they are struggling now

Feudal forces and fundamentalist elements snowed down the advance of the insular but stubbornly independent communities Despite monarchs and chieftains repressing their genius, they never abandoned their Karakoram courage and fierce love of freedom nor surrendered the democratic essence implicit in that indigenous institution, the Jirgah or local assembly and Loya Jirgah or High Assembly Tribal differences apart, the Afghans were united by Islam, a liberating and egalitarian religion rooted in universal brotherhood, peace for all and dignity of Man However, the clergy

and the kulaks combined to inhibit the Afghan hunger for advance and held them mind-cuffed and manacled. And so, people's power, with focus on modernisation in industry and agriculture, education and social institutions could not find effective expression. This suppression and impoverishment of centuries, this bondage of ages, was burst asunder by the Saur Revolution of 1978. This epic event was history in the making, democracy in locomotion and inauguration of a process of renewal currently blowing to change all spheres of Afghan life - social, cultural, economic and political.

The Afghan saga and its march to the future are not a mere matter of fifteen million humans struggling in the Hindukush mountains but a high drama of global concern and of strategic significance. Why? This land-locked country has been a prosperous trade route, geopolitically central and powerful, if united and non-aligned and free. Bounded by the Soviet Union in the North, Pakistan in the east and south, with a narrow strip peeping into China and a long border with Iran in the west, this snow-bound territory of 650,000 Kms. has been the cynosure of imperial intrigues, hot wars and unhappy disunity. More than a hundred tribes and nationalities, with ethnic and linguistic diversities, the hunting ground of military adventurists and feudal fundamentalists, Afghanistan has suffered the trauma and tragedy of backwardness and subjugation, with an undercurrent of finer culture and a deeper soul, striving for material salvation which is the people's birth-right.

Look at the lurid contrast between the story of glory marred by gory chronicles terribly presented by the authors of 'Inside Afghanistan'. But the Afghans are a proud nation, proud of their hoary past. Buildings, sculptures and seals covered with heiroglyphs, though not ali yet deciphered, bear out unambiguously that the process of evolution in Afganistan has been on lines similar to what one wintnesses in Central Asia. If India, along with Persia, Mesopotamia, and Egypt is today recognised as one of the few areas where the first seeds of civilization were sown and developed, Afghanistan too has claims to such a distinction. A number of ceramic items discovered in the country show similarly with those found in Harappa, the site of ancient India culture.

It has also been established that Harappan towns received copper ore and lazurites from Afghanistan. In fact, some Afghan historians, including Mohammad Ali, claim that it was in Afghanistan that the "oldest Aryan hymns and a great part of the Rig Veda were composed".

In the seventh century B C , it was in Afghanistan that Zoraster was born, who preached his monotheistic religion which later became the state religion of Iran He was born in Bactria, the "mother city", in north western Afghanistan now called Balkh This unique historical place has been the home of many great men and women The renowened scholar, thinker and physician, Ibn Sina, also known as Avicenna, was born here His mother, Sitara, was from Bukhara "

A few historians have succeded in showing that during this period the Aryans trekked into India from the west and north west passing through Afghanistan It was also the gateway to India for successive waves of invaders We are told in the Rig Veda that Yadu and Turvasa, two famous Aryan tribes, were brought to India by god Indra from a distant land Some tablets belonging to the 14th century B C discovered at Boghaz Keui in Asia Minor make reference to kings who had Aryan names and who used to invoke the blessings of gods Indra, Mitra, Varuna etc It is probable that the Aryans came from Asia Minor and the adjoining areas through't this region and Punjab became their earliest home in India Their conquest of this Indus Valley and penetration into the Gangetic basin date back to pre history period

This was followed by a period when Afghanistan became part of the Persian empire Then history takes us to the years filled with wars between the Greeks and the Persian kings These wars climaxed when Alexander of Macedonia defeated Darius III, the last Achaemenid king, and conquered the entire territory of Afghanistan and continued his march towards the east

Buddhism came to Afghanistan in the third century B C It took deep roots and flourished for about a thousand years Then began the phase during which Turks and Arabs invaded the country Though the Arabs failed to conquer the whole of Afghanistan by force of arms, their religion, Islam, triumphed and was voluntarily adopted by the population

The essence of this history was that Afghanistan had faced one invasion after another which destroyed its economy, social system and above all created a sense of insecurity in the minds of the people " How spiritually sublime a cultural ancestry and yet how unjustly sentenced to penury, adversity and tragedy

This penetrating perception of the layers of Afghan agony leads us on to the zigzag of later events treading its way through the jungle of

centuries. Wars, plunders, blurred boundaries and bleeding history. The poignant pages of the past tell us of Iran and Sikh conquests, British and Czrist take-over of parts of Afghanistan, and the Durand Line forced on the Afghans as a notional line of division remaining as a running sore and national humiliation for the proud frontier tribes. The British days of domination, waging three imperialist wars, sought to establish political control over this hardy race whose psyche had been conditioned against imperialism, intrigues, invasions and internecine wars by the bitter annals of bygone centuries.

Then came a fresh page in the Afghan people's autobiography - the bond of friendship, in an equal treaty, with the Soviet Union, a near neighbour and reliable ally. This paramount event is too critical and too long-standing to be obliterated by the passage of decades. The land of Lenin recognised the Independence of Afghanistan and established relations of freindship and alliance with King Amanullah. Both benefitted by this transformation of international relations. The deeper roots of Soviet-Afghan ties put out fresh shoots of mutual assistance whenever contemporary compulsions commanded such a course. When Amanullah refused to allow Afghan territory to be used as a base for operations against the new-born Soviet Union, it was a great gesture. This touch of mutuality has informed the relations of these two neighbours.

"When the British imperialism unleashed its third war against Afghanistan in 1919, at the suggestion of Lenin the Soviet Government supplied the Afghans with one million gold roubles, 5,000 rifles and ammunition, helped in the construction of a powder plant and the setting up of an aviation school in Afghanistan and set technical specialists there. It was after this development that the first Treaty of Friendship between the two countries was signed on February 28, 1921. It clearly showed how a socialist country, though a great power, built its relations with its neighbours on the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs. It should be kept in mind that these friendly relations existed for many decades though these two countries had different social systems and that "neither side made any attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of the other."

> "Again, in the Second World War, when the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, the Afghan Government dismissed the Nazi agents and

> maintained strict neutrality This step was of great help in those crucial years With a secure border of more than 2,000 kilometers in the south, the Soviet Union could despatch additional thousands of trops to the front"[1]

The first Soviet Afghan Treaty of 1921 was signed by Lenin and the latest treaty of 1978 is but an expression of the unbroken good neighbourliness of the two countries It is therefore honest history to recount What General Secretary Gorbachev asserted

> "Progressive forces of Afghan society have understood and accepted our sincere desire for peace and tranquility between our two neighbouring countries, which for several decades were showing an example of peaceful coexistence and mutually beneficial equitable cooperation "[2]

The international scenario has changed a great deal with American interest in Afghanistan Thanks to the geographical proximity of Afghanistan and Soviet land, American ambition wanted to get a pliant client in Kabul, knowing the consequent vulnerability of the U S S R to U S militarism The soft underside of the Soviet Union could be exposed to U S penetration if Afghanistan became a satellite but Afghan Soviet [illegible] made of sterner stuff Washington wished to win over by offer of economic aid and political pressures Shah's Iran and Zia's Pakistan were useful tools But history, especially when people's power seizes hold of the processes of social justice and national liberation, is a tougher proposition True Afghanistan was, have not nation, rich in natural resources, but developmentally poor and stricken by economic privation, social injustice, general illiteracy and the power of the reactionary clergy darkened of Land of the Rising Sun

> "Before the Saur Revolution of April 27, 1978, Afghanistan was considered to be the most backward country The per capita income was US dollars 153 in 1977 78 (Afghan year 1356) The country had no heavy industry, no railway and just 2,729 km of asphalted and 5,000 km of gravelled roads Mining and manufacturing accounted for only 3 3 per cent of the GNP About 71 6 per cent of the entire working population was engaged in

agriculture which accounted for 57.1 per cent of the national income. Almost every fifteenth person was unemployed".[3]

The blandishments of the United States, perfected into strategems of temptation and corruption, and operated with felonious success in the Third World during the fifties and after, were tried by Washington on Kabul. Efforts were made to entice Afghanstan into the spider web of White House philanthropy, coupled with blackmail policy, Iran and Pakistan doing their part in the play.

"The first agreement for building roads and irrigation systems in Helmand valley (South Afghanistan) was signed between the Government of Afghanistan and America's Morrison Knudson Company in 1946. This work had to be finished by 1949. But the project was deliberately delayed with a view to putting greater financial burden on Afghanistan. Kabul had to, therefore, borrow more money from the US government. In 1947, Washington sanctioned a loan of US dollars 21 million. It did all this to tighten its grip over the economy of Afghanistan, to quote one example.

"In the early fifties, US-Afghan economic relations took a new turn, as American technical experts started directly supervising various projects-agriculture, industry, mining, health and exploration of natural resources. With the help of these economic levers, Washington started pressurising Afghanistan through Pakistan. After the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the people of Afghanistan refused to recognise Pashto-speaking areas as part of Pakistan. Nor did they recognise the artificially created Durand Line as the common border between their country and Pakistan. Afghanistan suggested again and again that there should be talks between the two countries to settle the border dispute. That is the reason that Kabul declared in 1954 that the agreement of 1921 with the British-ruled India had become invalid."[4]

The Shah of Iran, in whom the US had invested great hopes, became a refugee of history and fled the anti yankee and terribly bigoted Revolution of Khomeni Pakistan also could not deliver the goods because of the bitter border disputes with Afghanistan over the Pashto and Baluchi speaking areas , Pressure upon Kabul to move into the western orbit thus failed and the Afghan panorama tended to become more and more crimson No Afghan King or President could or would walk into the western alliance despite the overt and covert manipulations of the C I A One need not delve into the shifting course of Afghan history since fundamental forces govern finally The geo political imperatives compelled this mountain country to remain non aligned and to overthrow those who, 'dressed in a little brief authority', did 'fret and strut the hour' only to pass into oblivion by the inevitable 'Saur' Saur Revolution was no accident 'Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement' (Lenin) This movement came from the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan This radical party was the expression of the people's urge to revolt The late Justice Douglas, a remarkable Judge on the American Supreme Court, in his 'An Almanac of Liberty', rightly remarked 'The right to revolt has sources deep in our history' The mountain race on the Hindu Kush also had this right The PDPA was the tool and 'Saur' the product

A flash back will illumine the emergence of the nationalist forces toppling diadems and defeating intrigues of imperialism and their proxies We borrow from that perceptive book 'Inside Afghanistan' The story runs thus

> "The British colonialists who had established themselves in India repeated their familiar tactics 'of divide and rule' in Afghanistan in the early 19th century which had been so useful in India They promised to help King Shah Shuja in Kabul in 1809, against his rivals His successor Dost Mohammad, who refused to yield to British manipulation was overthrown and a puppet king put on the throne after the First Afghan War in 1839-42 However, the freedom loving people inflicted a crushing defeat on the British expeditionary forces and very few of the invaders could escape to India Later in the seventies of the 19th century the British in India continued their efforts through pressure, blackmail

and intrigues to subdue the Afghan rulers and establish their domination over the country. Failing in these efforts the British launched the second Afghan War in 1878. The Afghans could not successfully resist the British aggression and Yaqub Khan, the new Afghan King, was forced to sign the infamous Treaty of Gandamak. The capitulation by Yaqub Khan and the Gandamak Treaty deprived Afghanistan of its sovereignty, and the Afghan ruler was totally subjugated to the British rulers in India, Afghanistan had to cede several districts to the British. Under the Treaty the Afghan ruler was to receive a subsidy from the British. It was under these circumstances that the British forced Afghanistan to accept the Durand Line, demarcating the boundary between British India and Afghanistan in 1893. The Durand Line had been imposed on Afghanistan at a time when that country's sovereignty was under serious restraint as a result of the Treaty of Gandamak. The line divided the Pushtun people, Pushtun families and Pushtun tribes. It is understandable therefore that Afghanistan refused to recognise the Durand Line after the withdrawal of the British power from India in 1947. The demand for Pushtunistan, the major source of conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan is the upshot of this Line."[5]

Then came the October Revolution which took the world by storm:

"The nascent Afghan nationalism received a boost when the young Soviet State became the first State to recognise Afghanistan's independence and sovereignty. King Amanullah, who ascended the throne in February 1919, had asserted complete independence and sovereignty on all domestic and foreign issues and had declared Afghanistan's entry into the community of independent States. Soon after this declaration of independenle King Amanullah established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. Lenin, the leader of the Soviet

> revolution, expressed the hope that "the establishment of permanent diplomatic relations between the two great peoples will open broad opportunities for mutual help against any encroachments on the part of foreign predators on each other's freedom and possessions "*

Amanullah was symbolic of the stirrings of the people for change But he too became a lucent footnote of the Afghan odyssey

> "King Amanullah, was not a radical revolutionary He was nationalist minded monarch with no consistent modernist philosphy His policy of reforms provoked serious hostility among the social groups who had a vested interest in preserving the old feudal tribal order Local mullahs, conservative tribal chiefs and feudal lords, instigated and supported by the British colonialists in India, engineered an uprising against Amanullah Religious and obscurantist emotions of the illiterate and poor tribals were aroused Many powerful forces within King Amanullah's own regime were secretly conspiring with the British rulers in India The conspiracy was successful King Amanullah had to abdicate in 1929 The power in Kabul was seized by the bandit leader of the uprising, Bacha Saqa Bacha Saqa was soon replaced by General Nadir Khan who assumed the title of Nadir Shah The new king undid most of the progressive reforms introduced by King Amanullah "

World War II witnessed new developments

> "The world was divided in two camps The camp of imperialism and that of socialism led by the Soviet Union Whereas the leadership of many newly independent countries joined with the United States in military alliances like the CENTO and SEATO, many others decided to follow the path of non-aligment The substance of non alighment was anti imperialism, anti colonialism and anti-

racialism. The non-aligned group of nations was led by India under the leadership of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Afghanistan also joined this group. "Afghanistan's unique socio-cultural history, geographic location and traditional non-aligment helped it steer clear of military pacts, although at least in the post-war period, the USA toyed with the idea of arming the Afghans". Though other reports have suggested that Afghanistan had requested for US arms but the request was rejected. The Soviet Union carried on its traditional policy of helping and supporting the independent countries of the East of maintain their independence by promoting self-reliance and Afghanistan was one of them. In the post-war period, the 1931 Afghan-Soviet Treaty on Neutrality and Mutual Non-Aggression was renewed. The Soviet Union assisted Afghanistan in buidling more than 60 industrial, agricultural and other projects. These included consumer goods and chemical industry enterprises and automobile engineering and house building factories. Two modern motor roads, Kushka-Kandagar and Kabul-Shirhan, of considerable economic significance to Afghanistan, were built with the Soviet help. The Soviet Union also helped Afghanistan in the exploration of natural gas, a part of which is now being exported to the Soviet Union."[8]

The stage was set for progressive elements to burgeon into political movements. King Zahir Shah promulgated a new Constitution in 1964 :

> "The new constitution granted limited rights to the people and an election was held the following year. It was during this period that the scattered progressive circles were attempting to establish unity in political and organisational spheres which in other in words meant the formation of a really revolutionary party. These efforts for unification and formation of a single party went on for a year,

till the end of 1964 The first foundation Congress of the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was held in January 1, 1965 The Congress finalised the organisational principles and the political platform of the party A Central Committee of seven full members including Nur Mohammad Tarakki, as General Secretary, and Babrak Karmal, as Secretary was formed Four alternate members had also been elected to the Central Committee by the Congress

"The programme of the PDPA, endorsed by the *founding Congress stated that at the then historical* stage only the national democratic, anti feudal and anti imperialist revolution would open up the real prospects for overthrowing the feudal bureaucratic rule and ensuring genuine national freedom and social progress The programme laid down the following basic tasks to overthrow the feudal and anti popular exploiter regime, take over political power and ensure transition to a non capitalist path of development The PDPA programme declared, as the final goal of this path of development, the building of socialism in Afghanistan The PDPA's objective was the establishment of people's sovereignty based on the unity of workers, peasants, all the working people, and all national and patriotic forces including national patriotic bourgeoisie "[9]

The last of the decadent rulers was Daoud whose savage actions accelerated the Saur Revolution It was not a happenstance nor coup by a few military agitators

'The times of that superstition which attributed revolutions to the ill will of a *few agitators have long passed away Everyone knows* now a days that where ever there is a revolutionary convulsion, there must be some social want in the background, which is prevented, by outworn institutions, from satisfying itself"

—ENGELS

Thus came the revolution right in time to establish formally a people's regime expressed through the take over of Tarakki under the banner of PDPA

"History will not forgive delay by revolutionalists who could at once be victorious". (Lenin).

It was not a military coup but the mountain country taking control over its own destiny. The Afghan tribe who loved peace and freedom, who were suppressed and victimised by intrigues from outside and misruled from inside, broke the chains of servitude. For long centuries this great moment was in gestation and the revolution was but the timely cesarian. "No single man makes history. History cannot be seen just as one cannot see grass growing" (Borris Pasternak).

The April Revolution was the historic outcome of the accumulated stresses of injustice to a whole people. "There is one thing stronger than all the armies in the world; and that is an idea whose time has come". (Victor Hugo). 'Saur' was the hour when the great idea of a democratic revolution took wings. April 1978 marked the watershed. The New Afghan Dwan shone at last and that epic event also signified a radical rupture with the reactionary culture which kept the people prisoner. Those who read history with the insights of dialectics will easily realize the inevitability of the Saur Revolution which was the climax of a growing protest against the infliction of the myriad injurtices :

"A government founded upon anything except liberty and justice cannot stand. All the wrecks on either side of the stream of time, all the wrecks of the great cities, and all the nations that have passed—all are a warning that no nation founded upon injustice can stand. From the sand-enshrouded Egypt, from the marble wilderness of Athens, and from every fallen, crumbling stone of the once mighty Rome, comes a wail as it were, the cry that no nation founded upon injustice can permanently stand".

—ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

The political injustice long perpetuated had to meet with its Waterloo and that occured on April 27, 1978. To defend this victory which was assailed and sought to be subverted by aggression and insurrection, the Soviet Treaty was invoked. Not an extra-ordinary event for Indians who remember the Chinese Aggression. Babrak Karmal who ascended the highest office (Dec. 27, 1979), justified the entry of Russian tropps thus :

"Today I declare once more to all the people of the world that the entry of the limited Soviet contingents into Afghanistan was in accordance with the request of the late Noor Mohammad Tarakki

and later, of Amin's Government, and was begun much earlier than the election of Babrak Karmal to the responsible position of *leadership of the Party and the State* "[10]

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The April Revolution was painted *red* by its enemies inside and abroad Afghanistan was not ripe for an October Revolution nor even for a socialist transformation What did happen was a determined popular explosion installing a non aligned government and a new democratic order, nationalist but not yet socialist, accepting political pluralism and measures of social justice but not ready for crimson radicalism This position was made absolutely clear by the leader of the PDPA Tarakki's blunders and excesses *confused the people but when* Babrak Karmal became the Captain of the Nation the *evolutionary* phase of the Revolution was inaugurated on 27th December 1979

One of the fundamental factors which moulded the D R A's destiny was obviously the deep impact the Soviet Afghan relations made on the developments before and after the Revolution October, it must be remembered, had global fall out Dr Najib in an address in *July 1987 nailed the lies spread about Afghanistan being a* Soviet satellite

"In principle, we should not approach the Afghan Soviet relations in ordinary dimensions or from the position of the present situation We should meet these issues from a permanent and objective position For, the relations between Afghanistan and our northern neighbour have been firm, friendly and of mutual benefit, in all regimes and periods Our countries were, are and will be good neighbours Our peoples have lived, are living and will live on the banks of the Oxus river and in the ranges of Pamir mountains We are neighbours by God's will and have lived besides each other according to historic and geographical situation We should not quarrel regarding such a situation

Therefore, in every condition the Afghan governments have had and will have good and friendly relations with the Soviet Union In the reign of Amanullah Khan, Nadir Shah, Zahir Shah and Mohammad Daud it was so It has been so in post revolution years and will remain in the conditions of the coalition government We believe in this, for in no condition can anyone frustrate the closeness of interests and relations of the two countries These relations have been founded or mutual geographical, historic, and economic

interests and the tradition of cooperation and friendship."[11]

Afghanistan has been a founding mer:ber of the non-aligned movement and, even today, is steadfastly committed to the principles of N.A.M. Afghanistan has, of cource, received substantial developmental assistance and institutional inspiration from the Soviet Union, more especially after the revolution. Our visit to various institutions and organs of state indicated that humanism was writ large and man and women and child were the beneficiaries of Soviet help. Never-the-less, Afghan individuality with Islamic paramountoy, political diversity and insularity, Tribal vaccinated it against Sovietization.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Abdul Wakil explained at a National Conference of the P.D.P.A. the foreign policy of the D.R.A. vis a vis the Soviet Union :

"The history of Afghan-Soviet relations testifies to the fact that the links and cooperation between the two countries have not remained limited to the economic, technical and cultural exchanges and cooperation, but the country of Soviet have always supported the stand of the D.R.A. in the international arena, because the approach of Soviet Union towards Afghanistan has always stemmed from the idea and existence of a free, independent, committed and non-aligned Afghanistan, the friend of the Soviet Union, is in conformity with the interests of the people of the two countries, peace in the region and all over the world. Afghanistan, in its turn, by realising this fact, in spite of the endeavours of certain imperialist and reactionary circles who have been trying to draw our country into hostilities against our great northern neighbour never resorted to anti-Soviet action. For example, during the Second World War, Afghanistan, in spite of the perssure exerted by the Hitlerite Germany, refused to be turned into an anti-Soviet front and preserved its absolute neutrality. Also after the Second World War none the regimes and governments of Afghanistan, inspite of the endeavours of the imperialist circles, joined any anti-Soviet bloc. Besides that, the Soviet Union has never invited Afghanistan to join any treaty.

"The Soviet Union has continued its all-round assitance at the most difficult moments of the history of our country, i.e., at the time when the DRA has become the target of imperiaist aggression, this assistance is being enriched with new content in the forms of economic, trade and cultural cooperation with the Soviet Union."[12]

Political pluralism has been throughout a basic factor of national reconstruction both under Babrak Karmal and Dr Najib The decrees of Tarakki were forward looking and essential to redeem Afghanistan from medievalism But the extremism of implementation and the rashness of the cadres pushed back the cause

The military assistance rendered by the Kremlin was in fulfilment of the Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Cooperation of 5th Demember 1978 concluded between the D R A and U S S R and in conformity with Art 51 of the U N Charter The movement the 'contras', armed cap-a pie by the U S , and the Pakistan forces aggressing into Afghan land took their off the trigger and agreed to a cease fire, Afghanistan would no longer need the Soviet military contingent The Soviets, on their part, would also like to withdraw This position has been made clear by the Soviet leaders and the Afghan leaders from time to time When I met Karmal and later Dr Najib in my two visits, the leaders were very clear that the limited Soviet forces would go back home, once conditions of belligerency and instigated fratricide were ended by the enemy Everywhere we sensed the desire of the Afghans to see the Soviet go home once peace was in sight The Soviets too were weary and would love to return The pivotal point was a unified, peaceful Afghanistan with the 5 million refugees back to their warm homeland

National reconciliation became an important item on the agenda of the future because the Afghan leadership was soulfully stressing the constructive necessity of pursuing the policy with flexibility and firmness They had burning sincerity in opening talks between the Government of the D R A and the Opposition to achieve cessation of war and return of the refugees They were willing to share power with other parties and form a National Coalition based on the *founding faith of the Saur Revolution* [12a]

Islam has been another issue exploited by the 'contra' propagandists The PDPA policy on religion has been affirmed thus *at the National Conference*

"Party's Policy on Religion—

"The PDPA is the vanguard of the people who live according to the tenets of the sacred religion of Islam One of the fundamental and unavoidable principles of the activities of the party is the acceptance and respect of the norms, social and moral values of Islam The party takes into account the unavoidable truth that the national

democratic April Revolution reflected the powerful endeavours of the vast masses of Moslems of Afghanistan for the complete establishment of the principles of social justice and equality which conforms to the tenets of the sacred religion of Islam. The PDPA pays serious attention to practising and ensuring all the rights and freedoms of Moslems and honorable ulema. It also endeavours to ensure freedom of religious rites for all religious institutions and departments and supports all their efforts for national peace and accord. The PDPA comprehensvely supports all the efforts of the state for the construction of mosques and other religious institutions as well as preservation of sacred places of worship, the assistance to honourable religious scholars. Hajis, observance of all religious festivals." x x x

"According to the tenets of the sacred religion of Islam, in our country, complete freedom for the followers of other religions, provided it is not against the humanitarian principles and it does not pose any danger to the security of our society, must be ensured.

"The PDPA will not reconcile with the efforts of the enemies of our revolution and the people who want to hide their crimes under the name of defending the faith and under the guise of Islam to divert Afghanistan from the path of peace, social progress and justice it has chosen. We prove, indeed, that national and social progress does not contradict Islam, but the criminal deeds of those who reject cessation of war, fratricide and achieving of peace are in contrast to Islam and they sell out on the sacred ideas of Islam. Those who act against peace and social progress fight against the principles of the sacred religion of Islam, too."[13]

Islam enwombs fraternal justice, peace among peoples and unity with progress.

The PDPA whose leaders we met separately expressed consensus on the need for inclusion of other political parties in the governance of the country. Pluralism was a reality; rebels and refugees were sceptical about the P.D.P.A. and had to be accomodated in the sharing of power. A National Fatherland Front was the dynamic mechanism which could navigate the nation and operate, with functional success, the national reconciliation policy. The Government of the D.R.A. and its top echelons were also serious about holding elections, once conditions were ripe. We met the Judges of the Highest Court collectively and separately. They expressed their views quite freely and did not bother whether the

executive liked it or not We were struck by the independence with which they spoke, the self-confidence with which they explained the *functional freedom of the Judiciary and the progressive perspective* they adopted in applying Islamic laws to the problems of the people Afghan jurisprudence struck a note of modernity and humanism, harmonising with the Iwas of Islam The Lawyers and jurists, whom we met at conferences and elsewhere, were equally categorical about the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary They were quite opposed to any executive interference or party pressure in the functional sphere of the Court The worth of human rights is best *judged by the presence of a truly free judiciary By that token, the* Chief Justice Nizam uddin Tehzib and his companion Judges, some of whom spoke good English, impressed us with the democratic content of the Afghan polity

We met the Law Minister Mohd Bashir Baglani who was no *member of the PDPA but belonged to a different party We met Dr* Mohammad Hasan Sharq, formerly Deputy Prime Minister during Daoud's government and now General President of the Central Administration for Return of Repatriates He informed us about various facilities the government was providing in relief camps at Kunar, Herat, Paktia, Farah, Nimroz, Kandhar, Laghman and other places near Pakistan and Iran border to welcome the returning refugees We met Mr Abdul Rahim Hatif who is no member of any *party but is among the most respected independent Afghans in the* country He steers the National Fatherland Front, is President of the Afghan Indian Friendship Society, he heads the Constitution Drafting Committee, and the National Reconciliation Commission, and even organises assistance to refugees Spending considerable time with him we gathered that his basic ideology of constitutional reform was rooted in political pluralism and sharing of power by other parties along with the PDFA in a National Coalition National *reconciliation was neither a paper offer nor an ideal abstraction nor a propaganda ploy For Mr Hatif this measure of liberalism was the* desideratum We met an outstanding woman Dr Anahita Ratebzad who was a Minister under Karmal and continued so for some time under Najib She was no longer Minister but represented, so far as we could gather, the movement for the equal status of women Of course, we met a larger number of smaller men and women We met students and had private conversation with them Their views were *expressed fearlessly, especially the younger women students [1] We*

talked to people in the bazaar, in the shops, in Kabul's gurudwara, and Hindu temple. We had confidential conversation with the hotel employees who gave us the common man's point of view, untainted by politics. We kept an open mind and refused to be taken in by any official versions. Some PDPA members were not particularly happy at Karmal's exit from the Presidency—a sign of lingering, latent factionalism. Some cadres were immature, needed more political sobriety in handling the problems of the people. We came to conclusions which were on the whole optimistic. My meeting with Karmal, and a year later, our meeting with Dr. Najib were convincing testimony that the kismet of Afghanistan could not be shot down by American missiles or Pakistani rifles or the ammunition of the 'contras'. The note was one of reconciliation, ceasefire and national reconstruction. The Revolution was irreversible. 'Be not deceived' said Abrahm Lincoln; 'Revolutions do not go backward'.

A new Constitution has been drafted. A broad representation was behind the Loya Jirgah or National Assembly which passed it. An excerpt from an official version gives us an idea of the Assembly.

"The Loya Jirgah of 29th November 1987, the second Loya Jirah after the April Revolution, was convened at a moment by the people of Afghanistan for stopping the undeclared war of imperialism, cessation of bloodshed and fratricide. It adopted the policy of national reconciliation based on a national democracy, peaceful settlement of the present and future problems of the country, formation of coalition government, multi-party system, freedom of the press etc.

"The Loya Jirgah, in fact, had the historic mission of adopting the constitution and on that basis, elect President of the country.

"More than 1500 deputies had participated in the jirgah. Some participants were selected on the basis of the decree of the Revolutionary Council of the DRA, while others had been elected in the provinces. The selected ones included members of the RC of the DRA, Council of Ministers, the High Court, the supreme commission for national reconciliation, the executive committee of the National Front, provincial chiefs of the National Front, representatives of social organizations and members of the drafting and working committee of the constitution.

"In addition to the deputies of the people about four hundred guests were also invited to the jirgah, Ambassadors of friendly countries in Kabul as well as a large number of foreign and local journalists were among the participants of the jirgah."[15]

On the passage of the Constitution the Presidential Election was held and Dr Najibullah was unanimously voted to the high office Born in 1947, Pushtoon by nationality, jailed for revolutionary activity, elected General Secretary of the PDPA in 1985, thus Afghan supremo now guides the country in its creative crisis

In Dr Najibullah we discovered the mastery of perestroika He was accessible, never resentful of criticism, simple in his way of life, humble in the expression of his opinion, respectful towards dissent, sceptical about exaggerations, ready for patient struggle with determined will Indeed, he reminded us of the famous answers to his daughters' questionnaire by Karl Marx

> "(What is your favorite virtue ?) Simplicity (Your outstanding characteristi ?) Singleness of purpose
> (Your idea of happiness ?) To struggle
> (The vice you detest most ?) I am a man and nothing pertaining to man is alien to me (Your favorite motto ?) One must doubt everything "
>
> —KARL MARX

We are under no illusion that a long march is ahead for the Afghan people But it is significant that they are marching forward Geneva is proof of that The treck of refugees is testimony that national reconciliation is meeting with success The withdrawal of Soviet troops is a healthy and happy development in the offing The elections now being held establish the slow return to normalcy In the famous words of Winston Churchill

> "This is not the end It is not even the beginning of the end But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning"

V D Chopra *Inside Afghanistan* 1986 P 13
[2]Mikhail Gorbachev, February 8 1988
[3]Supra note 1 at p-9
[4]*Ibid* pp-13 14
[5]*Ibid* PP 18-19
[6]*Ibid* pp-19
[7]*Ibid* p-20
[8]*Ibid* p-21
[9]*Ibid* pp-22-23
[10]Ib d p 31
[11]Comrade Najib s Speech on Extension of Ceasefire (Official Documents) July 1987, pp 17 18
[12]National Conference of P D P A -On National Reconcilliation Documents November 1987 pp 178 179
[12]Dr Najib has reiterated this in his press interview on the eve of Geneva Accord April 13 1988
[13]Supra note 12 at pp 261 262
[14]Vinod Sethi, 'Revolution Brings About Emancipation of Women' Around The World Afghanistan Visited *Voce of the Corporate World* Vol 1 , No 3 p 27
[15]Loya Jirgah, Documents November 1987 Preface November 1978 p A

CHAPTER I

KABUL CALLING:

"Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given, and transmitted from the past".

- KARL MARX

The dawn was cold and bracing at the Kabul Airport but the friends who received me and Dr. Sethi with floral greetings and happy handshakes were warm and beaming. How was the flight? The flight was fine, the sky was gradually unfurling its golden, crimson glory. The journey was shortand smooth and gave one the feeling of close proximity between our countries. Spontaneously, many thoughts of historic strands which fertilised our bonds flowed and filled my mind. The image of Frontier Gandhi, who was recently laid to rest in Afghan country, imparted a nationalist dimension to our ties of friendship. When Indians and Afghans struggled against imperalism, Gandhi and Badshah Khan were comrades-in-arms. Even before, for centuries the two countries had military, political, and cultural inroads and exchanges and even racial hybridisation.

Afghan music, I remembered from an earlier visit, was so enchantingly Indian that I once suspected Saigal had reincernated in Ariana. And the Gandhara art, the Hindu icons in the Kabul museum, the Buddha period which embraced Gandhara (present Kandhahar Province) as broadly part of Indian *cultural* geography, the Mahabharata which mentioned Gandhara and the princess Gandhari, vivified the Indian's family feeling with the Afghan people. My recollections of a long meeting a year back with Babrak Karmal, who was then the President of the Republic, strengthened this fellowship when he adverted, with a touch of history, to facets of common cultural heritage of our two countries. Likewise, a long ago vist to the Kandhahar airport by my wife and me to the Moghul relics in Kabul in the fifties bubbled in my mind as memories of an ancient friendship. Yes, we were near, never distant. These fleeting thoughts

came to a stop as the aircraft touched down, we stepped down and were soon lost in the preliminary pleasantries with our gentle hosts

Many friends wondered what made us take to this hazardous adventure? Why did we go to Afghanistan when the Western Press was giving turbulent publicity about Kabul being in flames and the rebellion against the crimson Karmal now Najib Government being on the ascendant? Media missiles are more powerful than military projectiles, because propaganda drugs the psyche of the victims President Carter spoke of the role of media attacks as necessary for psychic victory when the said "any one dollar spent for propaganda is more efficient than 10 dollars alloted for armaments"

Indeed some friends who had swallowed the opium of Mujahideen success stories, even cautioned us against this high risk undertaking But I had visited Afghanistan when Babrak Karmal was in power and had spent a whole hour discussing the conditions in his country Then I had met Judges and Ministers, gone round public institutions and Jurists' Associations I had found nothing convulsive on the ground nor explosive in the air On the contrary, the Jirga delegates and the tribal leaders, who had assembled at some conferences, gave me the confidant impression that anti Afghan propaganda was largely American manufacture with Pakistani collaboration, and peace was descending on the tribal territories I dismissed the scary stories as motivated, at least grossly exaggerated Life in Kabul stately, busy, pretty, even in its poverty, was tuned to artless normalcy and charming simplicity

Even so, what was the occasion for my going? I was not in a mood for excursions nor tourist delights, what with many public commitments at home which spared me little time to go abroad and lonely advancing age which plunged me in sombre mood whispering to me to wander less Nevertheless, a friendly invitation from the Afghan Jurists' Association conveyed to me through their Embassy in Delhi was not to be brushed aside lightly, especially because I have been the President of the Indian Association of Lawyers all these years and am expected to respond responsibly Moreover, as one concerned with human rights in India, Sri Lanka and elsewhere, I felt it unfair to myself not to visit Afghan country, given appropriate facilities and freedom to see and inquire without the trammels of a conducted tour There is no substitute for independent observation

"We shall never reach a solution without the will

> and courage to truth. Truth is a passion. One cannot learn it; one must possess it."
>
> - ERNST TOLLER

My fine friend Dr. Vinod Sethi, who too was invited along with me, could substantially overcome the linguistic barrier because he knew fluent Urdu and Punjabi sufficient to supplement English and deal with the Pushtoo people directly, tho' imperfectly. Dr. Sethi was a much younger man than I, energetic and inquisitive, a political science scholar with no ideological slant towards crimson colours and enjoying community of interest with teachers of political science in other countries. His invigorating presence emboldened my ageing travels and human rights quests. His assuring company and exploratory inclinations brought the distant near and the truth clear as we met men and women in public offices and common bazaars, by appointment or accident, alone or in groups. The common Afghan, poor, rugged, rustic, yet hardy, hardly seemed inhibited by Party or Government. In more cunning, calculating communities with wheeler - dealer skills and genuflective arts, Mark Twain's tart comment aptly applies:

> "It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practise either of them".

Afghan naivete had a different flavour.

Apparently, the Afghan Jurists had disarmingly desired me and my friend to see things for ourselves and their bonafides met with acceptance on our part. Had they designs of getting me to consume their decoctions or conform to pre-fab interviews they had made a grievous error. One's integrity is non-negotiable, one's soul non-saleable! Moreover, what had the backward Afghans to offer me when I need nothing anyone can offer? Of course, even in the evening of life, who will not love a quiet sojourn in Kabul, that sweet, beautiful city blessed by silent mountains and smiling meadows, with slumbrous voices of falling leaves and sleepless winds? There is a certain professional camaraderies and inner voice among lawyers who are alert where injustices are inflicted by Authority and protest when freedoms are crushed by Power. To fight for the other's cause is in our blood, tho' leukemia and lucre are weakening lawyers'

fighting spirit The lawyer in me was concerned to know the Kismet of fundamental human freedoms out there That was an added reason why I persuaded myself to fly from Delhi to Kabul and spend ten long days I am past three score and ten and a day for me has more scarcity value than for a younger prodigal with long years ahead Life left is a dear trust and to waste it for dollars or pleasures is breach of trust All this brown study, with safety belt on, ended with a jolt as the air hostess announced our approaching landing

At the Airport we found ourselves relaxed and free among friendly lawyers and helpful embassy officials, but as we cast our eyes around we discried military helicopters at a distance reminding us that the lovely valley city and the mountain country, the home and haven of a peaceful people of tribal diversity and Islamic fraternity, was passing through a creative crisis of history Of course, we inferred that the military helicopters were Russian Obviously, the Soviet military umbrella served as a protective armour for the Afghan Republic But controversies are natural when foreign brass hats show up on one's dear country Many questions naturally arose, many interrogations needed to be investigated Many truths had to be discovered Many lies had to be nailed Is there an iron curtain with a Russain 'riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma'? Or is any Goebbel's brand of propaganda misled Mujahideen and refugees appetised by dollars and drug peddling as 'contras' with huge weapon supplies spreading illusions of an impending Afghan collapse? Is Allah under an externment order from Kabul? Meanwhile, the hospitable cars drove us on, even as our avid eyes absorbed the July joy of nature A long route along winding hills ended as we reached the top where stood the Hotel Oberoi Intercontinental renamed after the April Revolution as Maiwand Hotel

Our hosts gave us generous accommodation whose price would have been too dear had the dollar laden toursits not politically abandoned Kabul from their exciting itinerary out of American allergy to the Saur Revolution Our stay spread well over a week and our comforts left little to be desired Afghan fruits and juices, English-speaking guides,[1] unmindful visits and informational interrogations, a car at our disposal and meeting with local Hindus and Sikhs and several Indian traders loaded the days with unexpected facts about the social and political life of that country We enjoyed very cordial relations with our ambassador and his minions, one of whom was a Malayalee and, therefore, established instant intimacy

and veracious confidentiality with me, a malayalee. There was a Keralite as a local news editor. (What a soulful experience it is to meet a malayalee outside Kerala, whether in the U.S. or USSR or anywhere on earth!) We even met some knowledgeable party members who remained on the Karmal side even after his fall. They spoke freely about the conditions in the country, and even the state of the Party, altho' prudence might have prompted safer silence. Of course, our guides belonged to Com. Najibulla's broadening band of admiring claques, but well informed and patriotic. A unique opportunity unfolded itself before us to get to the honest facts. The wish to meet any high dignitary received speedy attention and fulfilment. The desire to step out of the engagements already arranged and to go out of the way to have confidential conversation with non-party personalities found willing compliance. To walk into a shop and talk to a private Afghan or Indian businessman on sensitive matters without interpreters gave us revealing facts on the situation. Dr. Sethi could talk Urdu. Even the hotel staff, now sulking but nostalgic about the halcyon days before April '78, were frank sources of information when party guides were not around. There was hardly any leader of consequence or person of importance we did not meet. Judges, jurists, constitutional reform committee members, youth leaders and women front-liners were on our list. No dull uniformity nor regimented unanimity rigidified the views expressed. We spent over an hour *in an unscheduled interview* with Secretary General Najib than whom non now higher sits in the Afghan power process.

The life of a people is not its political heavyweights. Its institutions, its common people, its women and children and living conditions, its youth's fears and hopes, its streets and shops and village safety, and other intangible imperatives of religion and education are the key to the quality of its system. We searched to get a feel of the Afghan spirit under conditions of great stress, to learn how far its value-frame had suffered distortion or secured deliverance, how far human rights had suffered spinal injury or regained their full potential. No one interfered with our meeting whomsoever we wished to ask questions. Some of them were pro-Karmal, anti-Najib, yet others longed for the regal days. We were free and resorted to unconventional ways. It is fair to assert that an open human book was before us in Kabul with none to screen or dossier, none to tell whom we should meet or where we should go. No

intelligence men haunted our movements, no party activists kept track of us, no conducted tours bound our visits Indeed, our meeting with Comrade Najib, the highest Party functionary was not in our original programme but was suddenly fixed up We were asked to mention any places outside Kabul we wished to see in the provinces We were warned about regions where fundamentalists might provoke explosive conflicts without notice, especially in areas closer to Pakistan Soviet forces kept those borders in effective check Provinces adjoining Russia were free from Mujahideen menace Even in Kabul all people, tribal and other, flock, trek back and forth or ply traditional trades Kabul was in social locomotion, women's radicalisation, industrialisation and advances on many fronts We found an artless people, free from shackles and loving a peaceful life But the politics of power, especially where socio economic democracy seeks to break out of feudal, regal, tribal and religious strangleholds of past centuries, is not butter and jam but blood, toil, tears and sweat

I have started off in the first person singular, although the pages that follow record a joint adventure with Vinod as partner This book is a joint work This visit has been rewarding because we have seen the people in the raw Our conversations have caught persons unawares Women without their veil, partymen stripped off their loylaty, politicians in moods of candour, Indians, Sikhs and Hindus in their true Indian colour, traders with business interests speaking the truth sometimes hostile, with no need to hide In the bazars of Kabulies and Indians, all assortments of people came by us, some spoke in private confidence while others did not bother whether others overheard them On the whole we could see Kabul intensively and extensively, feel the pulse and hear the heart beat of the common men and women There were many places to see out of historic curiosity and values of Indo Afghan cultural heritage Candidly we loved many things we saw and felt sadder, though wiser, because the Afghan millions deserved better

Great political paroxysms had taken place, a new Ariana was being midwifed from the womb of history When society is in rapid political motion, social forces clash for dominance and battles rage with no holds barred When feudal forces, regal realists and imperial watchdogs find a *conscious* people awake and radical cadres ready to navigate change and grasp political power, all means available are pressed into service religionism, tribalism, fear of communism,

torrents of untruth, free supply of arms and men to invade and suppress the *people* who march firmly to sieze power. Here in Afghanistan ages of feudal, fundamentalist, latifundist overlordship had hardened like mountain rocks. But there were the people with jirgas or councils and stubborn refusal to be subjugaged. The Loya Jirga, the Grand Assembly was also People's Power. When the Old Order was challenged by revolutionary stirrings seeking to transform die-hard patterns of life, politics, religion and the frozen processes of people, inevitably counter-revolutionaries struggled to resist. In our neo-globalist era of competitive politics 'red in tooth and claw', contra-fires are fuelled by Americans, their allies, clients, cronies and proxies. And this scenario of blood and iron and Big Power gamble descended on the sleepy tribal country. Any liberation struggle, with the masses in action and people's participation, can be understood only from the dialectical perspective of the thesis - antithesis confrontation and nationalist synthesis dictated by the specifics of a given society. We were clear in our minds that text book dogmatics and Marxological mechanics won't work. One (rash) step forward, two steps (pushed) back, is a common mistake of half-literate or copybook revolutionists. Wisdom demands of the leadership a dynamic grasp of a changing balance of forces and readiness to dare and do, retreating and advancing and adjusting strategies sensitively to quick change. Mao Tse-Tung once said of revolutionry methodology.

> "Revolution is not a dinner party, nor an essay, nor a painting, nor a piece of embroidery; it cannot be advanced softly, gradually, carefully, considerately, respectfully, politely, plainly and modestly."

Wrong moves, right according to text book theories, may fail if conditions are miscalculated. Dogmatic disregard for human rights, ethnic identities, religious sentiments, even customs of primitive restraints on women, and liberal largesse of aristrocracy and local chieftainship, may produce revolt from the very masses for whose liberation the overthrow is planned. Most revolutions fail because the leaders blunder in diagnosis or in reading the feel of the people's responses. Alas, all these lessons and propositions and infantile disorders are part of the Afghan saga. The chequered, zigzag course

of a decade of the Afghan chronicle reminded me of this wondrous country becoming the

> "Beautiful city! so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene! whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age Home of lost causes, and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties!"
>
> - MATHEW ARNOLD

These thoughts and fears flit across my mind as I stayed in the forlorn five star hotel The fate of human rights, the role of the Soviet forces in Afghan country, the politics of a single party authority, the folly of forcing the pace of reform thro' rash party cadres ignoring the people as primitive with revolutionary hubris, the self-defeating tactlessness of mishandling the policy on religion and customary practices in a country where Islam, even in its hard version, has an old hold over the minds of the peasants, these are where the grammar of economic motion of a sturdy, yet mediaeval and tribally divided society challenges the best political genius Lenin is classic on this topic and hear him here

> " Of course, in politics, where it is sometimes a matter of extremely complex relations - national and international - between classes and parties, very many cases will arise that will be much more difficult than the *question of a legitimate* "compromise" in a strike or a treacherous "compromise" by a strike-breaker, treacherous leader, etc It would be absurd to formulate a recipe *or general rule ("No compromises!") to suit all* cases One must use one's own brains and be able to find one's bearings in each particular instance
>
> "Is is not like making a difficult ascent of an *unexplored and hitherto inaccessible* mountain and refusing in advance ever to move in zigzags, ever to retrace one's steps, or ever to abandon a course once selected, and to try others? "
>
> "The *greatest, perhaps* the only danger to the genuine revolutionary is that of exaggerated

> revolutionism, ignoring the limits and conditions in which revolutionary methods are appropriate and can be successfully employed. True revolutionaries have mostly come a cropper when they began to write "revolution" with a capital R, to elevate "revolution" to something almost divine, to lose their heads, to lose the ability to reflect, weight and ascertain in the coolest and most dispassionate manner at that moment, under what circumstances and in which sphere of action you must act in a revolutionary manner, and at what moment, under what circumstances and in which sphere you must turn to reformist action."[2]

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The panorama of Ariana was a thrill to contemplate; the sad sights of charming Afghan damsels and its tall manhood struggling for bare survival wounded my soul. The forced loneliness of our large hotel, the slow glow of rosy sunrise in the valley and the sinking sunset over the mountain bastions of mullahs gave scope for reflections galore.

We ate our Afghan breakfast. Both of us were vegetarian, and so, baked bread and many fruits and glasses of pomogranade juice plus rice and curd filled our stomachs. We set out on our strange expedition to know the fate of human rights and religious freedoms and the truth of the charge of Russian occupation of Afghanistan and back-seat driving of its government. Of course, our sympathies were for the new colours coming over the valleys, the radical rupture with the reactionary culture which helped the feudal hold and colonial loot. But our first concern was to know if life was free; our commitment to consicence was to be satisfied if Afghan Administration was Soviet puppetry. Our democratic sensitivity made us search for the role of dissent, glasnost and Juggarnaut Party process, if any. The realities of social life had to be reckoned with. There were the fanatics, the imperialist infiltrators; the adventurist extremists and intoxicated ideologues who made no bones about the living faith of a people and their rights, and inflicted pseudo-revolutionary stabs on backward tribes. Tactless party cadres served the enemy thro' foolish forays in reformist illusion and negatived the advance of people's democracy. I recalled my hour long discussion with President Karmal on my previous visit. We had a more illuminating 70 minutes on these issues with Prsident Nijibullah.

What did we see or do during the ten Afghan days? I must confess that we did not go into the cities and valleys and remained only in the capital Kabul is the capital but is not Afghanistan, any more than Delhi is India It is a fallacy to draw facile generalisations about a whole people based on observations confined to its entrenched, pampered, politicised metropolis But why did we not venture into the provinces, especially because Afghanistan lives, like India, in its villages? Turbulence rages not in the urban centres but in the remote regions We denied ourselves first hand testimony *altho' our hosts did offer* to take us to any Afghan region which was not particularly involved in rebel activity Many provinces, the Kabul authorities told us, were effectively under government control altho' the contras did fugitive fighting on a few unpredictable occasions They admitted, however, that areas bordering on Pakistan and Iran were viciously attacked by rebels and wished that we kept out of those unsafe zones The Indian ambassador, who was very helpful and quite independent, broadly endorsed this Afghan view Based on these perceptions, a flight to Mazare Sharif was arranged, as desired by us It was beautiful country, real glorious, the ambassador told us There was to be a colossal religious congregation about that time and we could meet many mullahs, fakirs, tribal chiefs, common people from all over the land A rare festival where tribal torrents would merge, the way of life of provincial people would reveal itself and the religious feelings and responses to the changes could be best gathered from such an enormous, artless, native assemblage We fell for it but there was a snag Our ambassador who had been there last year narrated how he had got stuck for a few days because adverse weather suddenly descended on the valley and air travel was cut off This warning disturbed me because my budget in time for the Afghan excursion was limited and only a small slice was left If we were imprisoned by a hostile fog in Mazare Sharif all my plans - they were crowded - would be upset By way of aside, I must confess that, contrary to glib assumptions by many about me, even after superannuation years, days and hours keep me desperately busy, not leisurely idle My commitments escalate with age, difficult to extricate and cruel to cancel This tight schedule scared me from flying to Mazare Sharif with its unpredictable weather My hosts were unhappy because they were missing an opportunity to impress on us the rural reality by direct observation American engineered propaganda made it appear that Najib's (or earlier, Kamal's) writ

ran nowhere, that the Soviet Army and advisers governed the country, that the Mujahideens were the real rulers in the provinces, that human rights were in the mortuary under the red regime, and life and liberty were in peril.

So our broader purpose of going anywhere, seeing anything, taking to anyone, gathering any information without inhibition failed beyond Kabul and suburbs because of time constraints, *not* our hosts' hesitation. Of course, many provinces were troubles by sporadic upsurge and adventurist terrorism. Which country is that secure to-day? Kandahar, where I would have liked to go, had to be abandoned because of the brevity of my sojourn. National sentiment, rooted in patriotic memories of ancient cultural bonds and historic centres of Indian arts, came alive at the prospect, offered by my hosts, of a visit to the land of Gandhara Kings who figured in Mahabharat. I jettisoned from my mind the desire to see the tall Buddha statues uniquely kindling the common flame of Indo-Afghan ancestry. Suffice it to say, the blame for blinkering my observations to Kabul is mine, not the illiberality or apprehensions of the Afghan Government. However, our Kabul days were filled with busy meetings and visits. That capital city, where *a third of the country* resides, where the government sits and rules, where representative instrumentalities, judicial executive and legislative, operate, where the professions and institutions flourish, where authentic specimens of tribal life can be felt, where the developmental explosion and shape of the future are emerging from the womb of the Revolution, remains the heart-quarters and headquarters of Ariana To-morrow. Kabul gives you a glimpse of the Afghan march into the third millenium. Kabul is the driving belt of the Saur Revolution.

What were our objectives when responding to the invitation of the Afghan jurists? Not to learn jurisprudence nor to orate at lawyers' meetings. Not to go sight-seeing or go shopping. But to gather the truth of the chemical change of contemporary Kabul, gain a sense of the direction of the regime, the role and control of the Soviets, the quality of democracy in a one-party rule and the frank reaction of the religious, the women, the common guys and the Indian settlers who are a meaningful minority. Human Rights, independent judiciary, political pluralism, freedom of consicence, differences of opinion on public issues - these are the social essence of a living democarcy. Totalitarian controls with single party politics, even with crimson

masks and statistics of people's backing may not speak the truth, the *whole truth and nothing but the truth Therefore, a deeper and wider* probe, not confined to casual conversations but insistent on speaking without reservations, becomes necessary if the purpose of the mission is not to prove a casulty I am free to confess that ten days, however intensively spent, cannot take any one to the bottom of the sea or to the top of the hill except in diplomatic euphemism Even so, Vinod and I had a refresing experience of unusally frank private meetings and unscheduled intimate questionings The dividends were considerable, although the limitations of time and space hampered our pursuits

> "And the end men looked for cometh not
> And a path is there where no man thoughts"[3]
> (Professor Gilbert Murray)

1 Ahemad Masood, a former student of Delhi University who now works in the Ministry of External Affairs& Mohd Zia Selehi, a smart soft spoken P D P A activist, were our guides

2. *V I Lenin, 'On Petty Bourgeois Revolutionism' Novosti Press (1986),* pp 61-63, 85

3 Jawahar Lal Nehru, *Discovery of India*, 1985 Edn p 163

CHAPTER II

SOME HISTORY, SOME GEOGRAPHY.

It is an extraordinary feature of Afghan history that in the early days this country had been known as Ariana. What remains of that name today is perhaps in the Afghan owned Airlines. Neverth less, for Indians Ariana, the home of the Aryans, has got a friendly fascination and a heartening vibration. Some say that Afghanistan was a name first used by the Indian Sage Varahamihira in the 6th century A.D. Be that as it may, this mountain country is close to India geographically, although Pakistan's political emergence does make a difference in proximity. Neverthless, the Hindu Kush forms the backbone of Afghanistan and the physical features of this rugged and enormous range reminds us of our Himalayan stretches. Inevitably, Indian history and the mountain passes of the Hindu Kush have carried on ancient conversations for long, thro' migratory hordes, peaceful traders, pious pilgrims and conquering adventurists. Gandhara (Kandhahar Province) is very much in the great epic, Mahabharata. Indian history can never be written completely, whether it relates to arts and commerce, military invasions and external trade, even cultural interchanges and religious influences, without the pen portraying Afghan chapters of life and letters, spiritual infiltrations and Moghul, pre-Moghul and British conquests.

The role of the mountains is not always that of a barren physical barrier but also is of a promoter of positive activities shaping worldly affairs. A visit to the Kabul Museum convinces an objective student of the community of cultural history between the two countries. The mountains did not divide the two peoples. On the contrary, the Buddha stands tall and stately in the mountains, resting peacefully still even in icons. So too the Indian gods and godesses, although they too are asleep and do not have the vicious vigour to create blood-letting factions. The Hindu is no hated alien and his pantheon has shaped that race. Of course, Islam and its relics are very much there, and the people, whatever their tribes, are devout Muslims. The Afghan Past has deep Indian roots.

Some physical facts. Nestling in the mountains, the country has an

area of nearly 6,50,000 Sq K M Islam is the religion of its people and its language is mainly Pashtu Dari is the next This land locked republic is bound by the U S S R to the north, Pakistan to the east and south, China to the north-east and Iran to the west Known first as Ariana (the land of the Aryans) then as Khorasan (the land of the Rising Sun) this country became a separate State during the days of Ahamed Shah Durrani (In A D 1747) Agriculture is it's basic economy, but sheep-rearing is also an occupation Livestock, fruits, wool and skins are exported It has minerals as natural resources Its population is around 15 million but a third of it is in Kabul, it's capital

The mountains in their inhospitable heights and fertile valleys, have nourished diverse tribes, with the result that sans roads and other communication facilities, insularity has bred separatism among the many clans and communities, preserving cherished independence, individual dialects, cultures and customs A common bond is Islam, largely Sunni but Shina too Over 98 per cent of the population of Afghanistan profess Islam (out of them 80 per cent are sunnites and around 18 per cent are shiites) the rest profess Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism and other religions Two Indo Afghan realities of geography and history indelibly stand out They are not far-off countries but mountain bound brothers Likewise, on the cultural and religious fronts, not hostility but amity, with underlying common heritage, has been the hallmark of history The mystic chords of memory, the myriad facets of changing centuries, the mountain passes thro' which traders, travellers, torch bearers of cultures and military invaders moved, are the pages of a people's invisible process of progress The distilled saga of Indo Afghan relations brings to mind the Buddha, the Mahabharata, the Hindu *murtis* and the excellence of common ancient arts and marvels of music The Pasthu and Dari, which are the major languages, the Uzbek, Baluchi and Turkmenian the lesser ones, are blood relations of Punjabi, Urdu and Sanskrit Persian and Greek conquerors, Graceo-Buddhist arts of Gandhara, the Kushan tribe and Kanishka, that great Afghan ruler whose rule ran from Kabul to Mathura where Buddhist arts and religion flourished and who, as a Buddhist convened the First World Mahayana Conference in Kabul, are parts of our common chronicle

Bamian and its surroundings are full of Buddhist relics Thousands of caves and stupas, two great statues of Buddha, 53 and

35 metres high, and Buddha's 250 metres long statue lying in condition of 'Nirvana', are all a witness of the rich cultural heritage of Indo-Afghan relationship that had grown long before the birth of Jesus.

Legends speak that the Aryans who came to India via Afghanistan wrote the first Veda while still in Afghanistan.

Mahmud of Ghazni and his pillage, Alaudin, Genghis Khan have left behind military exploits and cultural footprints; Babur's conquering expeditions into India thro' Kabul, and the many waves of other military adventurers involving Kabul, Jalalabad, Ghazni, Kandhahar and Agra, are weary history, viewed from the angle of battles, victories, defeats and transient empires. But beneath the sword and the savage slaughter are the bleeding hearts and the building arts of loving people, whether on mountain roofs or tribal valleys. That stuff is real history, not the blood-stained biography of plundering adventurists with arms and ambitions. Any serious explorer of Afghan humanity's march into history will surely be impressed with conquests and cultures bringing India intangibly into the warp and woof of the geo-politicis of Hindu Kush region. But the baffling plurality of tribes, insular yet brotherly, slowly acquired a national identity only in recent centuries. Nadir Shah, a Persian prince, led battles into Kabul, came to India, defeated Bahadurshah who ruled over Dehi in 1739. Kings also must die and decompose; on Nadir's death his empire collapsed. Then arose, out of the ruins, a young general Ahmad Khan Durrani (Ahmad Shah) who was *elected* as Chief by a tribal assembly at Kandhahar. An elected ruler, he united the Afghan tribes, constituted a majlis or council and imparted a popular touch to his reign. Once secure in the saddle, he too took to invasion, the habitual frailty of imperious medievalists. Kabul was his capital, India his invasionary appetite. These sabre-rattling sequences are of no serious consequence to the dialectics of Afghan or Indian progress except to the extent of shaping the destinies of the two peoples. Ahmad Shah catalysed the tribal consciousness of Afghans into a national identity. He left India, even after victories, back to Kabul, but that chapter strengthens the historic fact that the two nations are more than neighbours, have had, in the bygone centuries of the ethnic-cultural sub-conscious of the peoples, a common estate of experiences, battles, exchanges, arts and languages and human presences. The Afghan in India and the Indian in Afghanistan are no strangers. Just recall. Badsha Khan was

Frontier Gandhi and stalwart soldier in the Indian struggle for Independence Thr first Free Indian Government was formed in Kabul Subhash Bose escaped from British internment, during World War II, into Kabul Afghan nationalism put out its fresh shoots (1747) but amidst feudal and fundamentalist environs and tribal insularism On such terrain it takes time to take root Imperialism views with an evil eye national forces everywhere and bids its time to break the backbone of any independent people India has paid its price Afghanistan, weaker and more easy to maneauver, attracted the attention of the British East India Company which, at about that time (the 18th century), was developing into a major political force in neighbouring India After the battle of Plassy in 1757, the British turned their attention to Afghanistan The appetite of imperalism is never satiated The East India Company was a mask Imperial Britian was the power which operated

Ahamed Shah died and Afghanistan began to breakdown A series of intrigues by the British, playing off one chieftain against the other, gave the British, that 'nation of shop-keepers' the ability to penetrate into Afghan territory As often happens during the transition between feudal and later stages, kingly rivalries, feudal feuds and local treacheries make the independence of the people vulnerable The British launched the First Afghan War and won Nationalism could not be suppressed so easily by one victory or by the throne tottering for a time The country rose in revolt and the British forces retreated or perished It is needless to trace the tedious zig zag of history except to state that the Royal Proclamation of 1858 whereby Queen Victoria became the Empress of India, made a qualitative change in the political equation in the region In November 1878, the British invaded Afghanistan and won many victories The then King Sher Ali Khan surrendered, fell ill and died Many events followed, the Durand Line between British India and Afghanistan was drawn and the Amir had no option but to accept the Line The Durand line had been imposed on Afghanistan at a time when that country's sovereignty was under serious restraint as a result of Treaty of Gandamak The line divided the Pushtun people, Pushtun families and Pushtun tribes After the British left India demand for Pushtunistan became a source of conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan ! Anti imperialist sentiments spread across the country A movement for independence and liberal reforms sprang into existence Amanullah Khan, the third son of the

Amir, supported the movement and thus Afghan Independence came of age and its political personality was catalysed by the great October Revolution which took place next door. The October Revolution was a turning point in the history of national liberation movements. It profoundly influenced the anti imperialist and anti colonial struggle in colonial and dependent countries in many ways. The friendly and encouraging attitude of the Soviet leaders towards nationalist leaders and nationalist movements after the October Revolution was marked contrast to the domineering ways of the imperialist countries. The nascent Afghan nationalism received a boost, when the young Soviet State became the first State to recognise Afghanistan's independence and soverignty. King Amanullah who ascended the throne in early 1919 asserted complete independence and sovereignty on all diplomatic and foreign issues and had declared Afghanistan's entry into the community of independent States.[2] Amanullah in early 1919 declared in a Garnd Durbar:

> "I proclaim myself and my country completely free, independent and soverign in all domestic and foreign issues. My country will thus become an independent state, just as other countries of the world".

Radicalism moved rapidly in that frozen country. Amanullah sent a message to the land of the October Revolution:

> "Although Afghanistan by its spirit and nature, from the time of its emergence has always been supporter of freedom and equality, however, due to certain reasons, it was deprived of the opportunity to maintain relations with other similar states and peoples". It concluded : "I am happy for the first time on behalf of the Afghan people striving for progress, to send you this friendly message from independent and free Afghanistan"

The great Lenin signed a treaty of friendship with Amanullah wherein it was also provided that neither would allow his territory to be used against the other.[3] Soviet-Afghan friendship is of vintage three score and ten!

The British were totally allergic to a free and anti-imperialist Afghanistan. In this context, it is important to realise how

Amanullah was moved by happenings in India and, at one Special Durbar, read letters from India with tears and emotion describing the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre and other British atrocities Of course, Islam also played a role in his inflamatory appeal 'Down with English 'Down with Queen Victoria' and like angry sentiments fired young Afghan breasts Inevitably, the British declared war on Afghanistan, and tried alongside the tactic of bribing the tribes Amanullah's leadership and the popular patriotism stood up to the challenge and the British signed an armistice with Afghnistan [4]

A progressive and democratic administration was the next essay of Amanullah Amir Amanullah wanted by one jerk to put an end to the century old backwardness and poverty of his country His programme envisaged the development of the economy and system of education, the limitation of influence of the most conservative part of clergy, women's emancipation Towards this end in 1923 the first Afghan constitution was framed The constitution reiterated the independence and sovereignty of the country and declared Amir Amanullah the country's ruler The people were granted fundamental freedoms, equality before law, personal freedom etc The constitution also abolished feudal duties and religious inequality To make the democratic process effective the organs of state administration the state council, the council of minister the Loya Jirgah (Assembly of Tribal chieftains) and Durbari Ali (the council of government officials) were modernised With the adoption of the constitution first step for creation of a constitutional monarchy was taken

The land problem was sought to be solved Economic programmes also were on the agenda The influence of the Clergy was restrained and social reforms, including secularisation of education, came under regal consideration Of course, these reforms met with resistance from vested interests with stakes in the feudal tribal order. Uprisings were engineered against the Government and the British, anxious to weaken the Afghan regime, supported the rebels At the Loya Jirga of July 1924 the Clergy joined hands with other reactionary elements and the King was forced to give up many of the reforms

Nadir, Amanullah's own War Minister fell a prey to British temptations to attempt an overthrow of the King who, after a successful tour to India, Egypt, Italy, France, Germany, Britain, USSR, Turkey and Iran, made another effort at modernisation and reform, inspired

by Kamal Ataturk. He called a Loya Jirga in 1928 and suggested introduction of co-education, sending of young Afghans for foreign education, banning of polygamy and so on. The Clergy could not take kindly to the measures of secularism and modernisation and the new secular laws and courts and declaration of religious equality and even the examination of qualifications of the Mullahs. A conspiracy of the clerical cliques and the feudal chiefs formed a rectionary resistance movement and declared Amanullah an apostate. Fanatical religion became a political tool of Mullah power. The Western media played up the hostility to Amanullah and backed the rebels, which is an old game. Nadir Khan, with obvious British support, assumed power in Kabul and tried to reverse the wheels of history. But the seeds of people's power and will to progress had sunk into the soil and spread into the streets. Here was the authentic Afghan beginning of the Saur (April) Revolution.

It is interesting, indeed insightful, read a page from the 'Glimpses of World History' where Nehry wrote:

> "Money seemed to flow in for (this) anti-Amanullah propaganda, nobody knew from where. Many Mullahs, the priestly ones, seemed to be paid for this work, and they spread all over the country, denouncing Amanullah as a Kafir, an enemy of the faith. Curious pictures of Queen Souriyah in European evening dress or some negligee were circulated by the thousand in the villages - to show how improperly she used to dress herself. Who was responsible for this widespread and expensive propaganda? The Afghans had neither the money for it nor the training; they were just suitable material for it. It was widely believed and stated in the Middle East and in Europe that the British Secret Service was at the back of this propaganda. Such things can seldom be proved, and no definite evidence was forthcoming to connect the British with this work, though it is said that the Afghan rebels were armed with British rifles. But it was obvious enough that England was interested in weakening Amanullah in Afghanistan."

We must skip the court intrigues and imperialist machinations dur-

ing the next years except to emphasize the decisive interest of the U S in Afghan affairs as part of the anti Soviet global strategy Britain's retreat after World War II from spheres of influence, did not leave any vacuum because of neo imperial American omnipresence and omnipotence Anyway, Zahir Shah was overthrown by Daoud whose opposition to the unjust Durand Line and Pakistan's denial of the Pushtun tribes claim the integrity of their territory won him popular support

> "The Afghans demanded the right of self determination for the Pushtuns in Pakistan and Pakistan closed overland transit rights for cargo to landlocked Afghanistan Kabul had also denounced the partially boycotted North West Frontier Province referendum of 1947 which offered people only the choice of joining India or Pakistan and not an independent Pushtunistan or a union with Afghanistan "[5]

Pakistan trained Afghan rebels even in the seventies Daoud was willing to compromise with his enemies to buy peace, to keep power The price was painful and anti people Pushtunistan must be given up, Durand Line should be accepted as international boundary, no regional autonomy for Pushtoons within Pakistan, no social reforms, and changes which savoured of modernisation In return, the Shah of Iran would give a few billions of dollars for development, including building a rail line linking Afghanistan with the gulf ports, thus ending Afghan need to go via Soviet land for trade These plans and plots, with the Shah of Iran and Bhutto of Pakistan were inspired by desire for propitiation of the U S and elimination of Soviet influence Islamic fundamentalists and feudal local leaders were ever ready to overthrow godless Kafirs in power, given guns and training Pakistan was sanctuary for all such activity

Daoud's weak republic and National Revolution Party were threatened with rightist armed insurrection but it was suppressed The ruler, as stated earlier, was however willing to come to terms and wipe out leftist elements The murder of leftist leaders, the arrest of communist party members, the people's unrest at Daoud's autocratic inability to work out progressive policies estranged many and made for tension in the country and hastened the Democratic Revolution which came on April 27 Daoud's opportunism did not

save him. The ink of history spills contrary sometimes when people's interests are forsaken and patchwork formulae to gain short mileage are accepted.

The watershed of Afghan history was the Saur Revolution when the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan took power with Tarakki at the head. On April 27, 1978 Afghans extinguished Kabul rule from Nadir Shah to Daoud, and inaugurated a people's chapter. In a struggle between the Old Order and the New, which will succeed is difficult to predict. In this world of hegemonistic forces, regional rivalries, feudal and fundamentalist opportunists, to reach the precipice of people's power process is a steep rise, zigzaging, retreating, advancing, compromising, stopping to catch some breath, keeping the tribes together with burning nationalism, always remembering that all Afghans are brothers and equals and must be patriotic builders of the Fatherland, in a spirit of mutual understanding. The master strategy is forging a united Afghan People dedicated to national reconciliation, democracy and God's peace. This is not copybook recipe but creative statesmanship capable of translating a larger vision into a people's passion and policy construction.

However, Powers, with foresight and reading between the lines, were waiting, watching and willing to intervene to win the prize - the prize of control over Afghan land. Kindly read the Washington Post (May 5, 1978):

> "Afghanistan is a great strategic price as it sits in a region of ethnic and national tensions and its tranquility is important to the stability of the region as a whole. The previous government in Kabul balanced off its neighbours quite well, even improving relations with one, Pakistan, with which it shares a tribe of substantial volatility, the Pushtuns. It also continued the long-standing Afghan tradition of welcoming support from various countries worrievd that somebody else might achieve undue influence. Foreign aid has been a principal source of national revenue for the Afghans, who are adept at capitalizing on their reputation as a country strategically and politically in the middle. But their feudal system has been poor at getting the aid to trickle down".[6]

The truth about revolutions is that the distress of people develops silently, slowly, but when circumstances ripen, when mass consciousness quickens, the blow is struck If the leadership misjudges or plays false, the movement boomerangs The arts and crafts of foreign powers, star spangled or hammer and sickled are not the real fuel of social motion It is the dynamic capabilities of the people and their readiness for sacrifice Speed is needed, not haste 'History will not forgive delay by revolutionists who could at once be victorious' (Lenin) And if the will for change has possessed the masses, no foreign deterrent will operate

> "There is one thing stronger than all the armies in the world and that is an idea whose time has come" (Victor Hugo)

Perhaps the hour had arrived by Kabul clock Napoleon is once reported to have remarked Revolution is an idea which has found its bayonets

> "On the 27 April morning, an open clash occured between President Daoud and a considerable part of the army opposing the arrest (of Communist leaders) Little after 3 p m artillery barrage began, while bombers attacked the presidential palace with missiles, the decisive attack was made in the evening"
>
> "In a message broadcast on 27 April Colonel Qadir announced that the Revolutionary Council intended to follow a progressive, democratic and non aligned course Internal policies, he said, would be based on "positive and clean politics" based on promoting Islam, democracy, prosperity and well being of the Afghan people In foreign policy, the new government wanted to live in peaceful co existence with its neighbours and the rest of the world, adhering to the principles in U N Charter It announced its commitment to a policy of 'strict' non alignment"[7]

Nur Mohammad Tarakki, President and Prime Minister Amin formed a Government, leftist but democratic, civilian, not military, led by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (P D P A),

not by the Army, non-aligned, not a puppet regime. The obscure developments of the P.D.P.A. and the dramatis personnel behind the revolt as well as the difficult course of the Democratic Revolution need a little more explanation, later. Human affairs never run smooth.

Not unexpectedly, the Western world, Pakistan, China and Iran suspected the Soviet hand in the sudden transformation, hardly realising that the new social order was waiting to be midwifed. Already there was suffocation so far as the people were concerned. No economic progresss and modernisation. On the other hand, the Clergy blocked the march of the people. The tribes which loved independence, were being divided or played with. Some day the chain had to be broken. That day is decided by imponderable factors and slow process.

> "No single man makes history. History cannot be seen, just as one cannot see grass growing."
>
> BORIS PASTERNAK

The birth of the democratic republic of Afghanistan was not Soviet handi-work. They could never have achieved it on their own any more than Pakistan or the United States could have prevented it. Radical Afghan leadership made it. To make a revolution is less difficult than to sustain it, promote it, keep it on course and avoid the mistakes of rashness, extremism and taking people for granted and the betrayal by adventurists. Anyway, the Saur Revolution had happened. Could Tarakki carry the people with him, fashion strategies, avoid mistakes, make principled compromises, defeat the propaganda war and the blasphemy that his Government is godless? Could he withstand the Mujahideen uprisings, the media attacks, the Pakistani intrigues, the American supplies of arms and dollar doles? Would Afghnistan be non-aligned and who will help if insurrectionary forces were unleashed, massively instigated and colossaly funded by outside agencies, mainly the U.S.A.? How would he face Iran's fundamentalism, Pakistan playing the role of U.S. proxy, China's peculiar ambivalence and support for Mujahideen? In short, would Afghanistan survive under Tarakki? And there was the intriguing, ambitious, cold-blooded operator Amin.

The Afghan Revolution was not a Socialist but only Democratic one. It installed Islam as State Religion, even paid the clergy from the coffers of the State. Freedom of religion of minorities was

preserved, private property in land was very much there But cadres are everything, the genius of the leadership is the key and the participation of the people is the revolutionary essence The Saur Revolution was home grown, not transplanted That was its strength John Adams said, of the American Revolution

> "The Revolution was effected before the war commenced The Revolution was in the hearts and minds of the people *This radical change* in the *principles, opinion, sentiments, and affections of* the people, *was the real American Revolution* "

This proposition is as much Afghan or Indian as American Then howcome Tarakki was murdered? How was Amin able to overthrow by stabbing from behind? How did Karmal defeat the enemies of the Revolution and, eventually, retired to hand over leadership to Najibulla? Eternal vigilance is the price of revolution and *perestroika* its marching torch The Party's collective wisdom and corrective self-criticism are the lode-star

A fuller grasp of the Democratic Revolution can be gained only by a brief resume of the beginnings of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), the decadent Daoud regime, the wobbling Tarakki Presidency and the well planned Amin treachery Karmal and his quite architect's role in the resurgence of Afghanistan and his great vision and charismatic presence fall in place and explain many ill lit events Some mistakes and extremist errors were made, and return to the correct route and the constant dialectical analysis of *polities needed a certain chage in leadership, and Najibullah took* over to guide the PDPA with his mastery of developments and ability to respond to realities A revolution needs a life-belt lest it should sink, a navigator lest it should lose direction, a whole Party as crew lest it should develop the disease of personality cult and the entire people behind it lest it should cease to be democracy or weaken its will under the ubiquitous pressure and blandishments of counter *revolutionary agents led by that ever ready battery and hungry tiger* the C I A

In a mood of double-speak, the C I A has adopted a biblical motto and inscribed it on the marble wall of its headquarters in Virginia

> "AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH,
> AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE"
> - JOHN 8 32

The more the Afghans know the truth of the role of U.S.A. - C.I.A. - Pakistan, the more this truth shall make Afghans free.

The roots of the modern Afghan democratic movement and the intrigues of the Western Powers, with Iran and Pakistan as proxies, lie deep. It may take volumes to unravel the conspiracies which prevented the Afghan people's efforts to blossom into a prosperous democracy. Nevertheless, it may be useful to notice that the partition of India disenchanted the patriotic Pushtoons who had identified themselves with the overthrow of the British under the leadership of Badshah Khan. With the partition of India, Pakistan became a hostile force against the border tribes of Afghanistan. It must be noticed that Iran too under the Shah was a stooge of the United States and frowned on the independence of Afghanistan. The Soviet Union, a natural neightbour, has been a stabilizing factor preventing Afghanistan from slipping into the western camp. Even so, the odds were against the democratic forces and there were enough reactionaries in the country to support any contra-movement. A rising Afghan democracy had subversive internal forces and insidious external Powers to contend with. The compulsions of Afghan society and politics made the young intellectuals think on constructive lines. Political activity could be catalysed only by political party. And so, the younger generation fought together and formed the Democratic People's Party of Afghanistan on January 1, 1965. Karmal was its brain and breast, but Tarakki was a senior member in whose house the founding conference was held. The party chalked out a programme of democratic struggle, made Tarakki the First Secretary. Amin, with a dubious political past, was not to be a key leader. However, Tarakki inducted him into the leadership of the Party. He had contacts with the U.S. and had a tendency for factional activities.

Democratisation became weakened by splitism. The economic situation was accentuated by drought and famine. King Zahir Shah was overthrown in July 1973 and the former Prime Minister Daoud took over the reins of office. He announced some populist measures like land reforms, but the situation was so pregnant with change that half-hearted measures were no answer. Meanwhile, a coup, with the aid of Pakistan and Iran, was attempted against Daoud but failed. The signals of Afghan politics were ominous. The split in the 'PDPA' was patched up. Events swiftly moved. The Daoud Government arrested many 'PDPA' leaders. Then came the Saur Revolution of April 27, 1978. Amin's role was dangerously suspicious and anti-

people, at a time when single-minded determination alone could have seen the thrust through The aggressive posture of Amin created problems for progressive leaders like Karmal President Tarakki was murdered Amin staged a coup and Afghanistan became a boiling pot "Strike now or never" was the choice for the PDPA's spearhead They struck on December 27, 1979 A carefully planned strategy met with success Amin was out and Karmal was in The Revolution, instead of being hijacked by Amin, was put back on it's democratic course

"The enemy increaseth every day,
We, at the height, are ready to decline
There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune,
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miserres
On such a full sea are we now aflot,
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures

1 Kalim Bahadur, 'The Politics of Saur Revolution' *Inside Afghanistan* (1985) p 19
2 *Ibid*
3 On February 28, 1921 The Afghan - Soviet Treaty of Friendship was signed in Moscow After the signing of the treaty Afghan's independence was recognised by other countries Within a short period of time Afghanistan established diplomatic relations with Britain, Italy, France, Germany, Poland, Belgium, Turkey, Iran and Egypt Zarina Majid', 'Young Afghan and Struggle for Independence', *Afghanistan Today* Sept Decemer 1986, p 7
4 On May 6, 1919 Britain officially declared war and concentrated a 3,40,000 strong well armed army against Afghans,a most of whom had out of date refles Military actios took place in three directions' at the Khyber Pass, in Khost and to the south Kandhar Having sufferde a serious defeat at the Fortress of Tal, the British signed Anglo-Afghan Treaty on August 8, 1919 *Ibid* p 7
5 D R Goyal, Afghanistan Behind the Smoke Screen (198) p 84
6 *Ibid* p 25
7 *Ibid* pp 24, 21-22

CHAPTER III

AFGHAN INQUILAB : A ZIG ZAG SAGA :

> "Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of nation, long suppressed, finds utterance."
>
> JAWAHARLAL NEHRU on August 14/15, 1947.

The Afghan people, in their tribal jirgahs, had often asserted their Indepedence but had never been fully free from domination. How long were they to be unfree under feudal and foreign and monarchical power? They resolved, at last, to regain their precious freedom with the massive will of a mountain race. History was against them for long but the time to redeem their title to justice, social, economic and political, arrived on April 27, 1978, when Afghan weapons established people's sovereignty and the P D P A (the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan) assumed power. A new chapter of political life was thus inaugurated, but the needed mobilisation of the multitude of tribes thro' a unified democratic consciousness, the creative tactics of steering the revolution *vis a vis* land reforms, universal literacy, women's emancipation, assurance that Islam shall remain in sublime command, consistently with modernisation and institutional reforms, and the solution of the problems of poverty were difficult challenges to the best statesmanship. Every faux pas made could prove fatal thro' internal subversion and external aggression, guilefully manipulated by reactionaries and outside Intelligence Agencies. Tarakki and his zealous cadres did an overkill through reform extremism and his dubious lieutenant Amin was a liability, if one may view the scene with hindsight wisdom. Without an explanatory campaign, even beneficial measures may be misunderstood, as happened in the land distribution scheme of Tarakki. It was well-conceived imperative of change but so rashly implemented that it backlashed and turned peasants against the progressive step. Why?

Dogmatic religious mullahs, who in most cases were also owners of vast lands, had completely misled the innocent and the ignorant peasants that land belonged to those to whom God had given it So to lay hands on it was to violate the will of God and a crime Under the influence of this "teaching", most peasants refused to accept ownerhsip deeds and some tore them up And those who accepted these lands had no water, because in the days of Hafizullah Amin, land was given to peasants but water resources remained with the landlords and their over lordship continued In this crisis, Tarakki himsef had to sign the deed and write that he was giving this land in the name of God as His representative And then the peasants accepted it Much harm had however been done to a radical project Rightly, surplus lands were ruthlessly withdrawn from the landed gentry but wrongly, a counter productive methodology was adopted The suddenness of the swoop antagonised powerful tribal sector and created enemies when friends were the need Likewise, women were brought into adult literacy drills in a rapid but rude manner The woman question in Islamic communities has to be handled with delicate care as sensitive sentiments are highly inflammable if forced measures are used There is no doubt that women must be free and education is necessary But the gentlest tactics, the most persuasive methods are the strategy Coercive processes of dragging women out of their purdah and bashfulness is to invite violent reaction And yet this blunder marred the wisdom of women's literacy programme [1] Theoretically speaking,

> "There will never be a generation of great men until there has been a generation of free women of free mothers "
>
> - INGERSOLL

But feminist issues are inflammatory in orthdox societies and there the art of revolution calls for the delicate care in execution Similarly, no social transformation will win unless awareness widespered and bigotry beaten back This is a condition precedent, tho' likely to be resisted by the entreched Social Establishment Robert Ingersoll made a wise remark

> "It is said that desire for knowledge lost us the Eden of the past, but whether that is true or not, it will certainly give us the Eden of the future "

Even here, any campaign of political knowledge must avoid land

mines like religious opposition and mullah authority. Here too, the basic hold of religion on an illiterate and insular tribal population is a most sensitive and explosive issue in an Islamic setting and primitive milieu. The charge of communism inevitable when Soviet support is sought or got, is a most dangerous one. The Mujahideen slogan is too insanely incendiary for successful fire-fighting by rational argument, and, like wild fire, it spreads fast. And Soviet presence is allergically radio-active for the unlettered and prejudiced masses. Jehad is the fever that grips the tribal millions when scared of godless governments. The U.S. President, Ronald Reagan who used to call the U.S.S.R. "the evil empire", the C.I.A., that American instrument of International intelligence, violence and pre-neo-imperialism, have been hell-bent on exploiting every opportunity to wipe out any pro-Soviet Authority in Afghanistan. Iran, the neighbour, under the Shah had sworn to eliminate all Left elements with fascist thoroughness and, under Khomeni, at once furiously fundamentalist and anti-communist, has always hated a democratic Afghan regime with a 'left' slant. And Pakistan, almost the puppet of the U.S. and terribly interested in heavy dollar aid and sophisticated military hardware to be used against India, has viewed a progressive Afghanistan with grave suspicion and used the Afghan alibi for flow of dollars and deadly weapons. The U.S. liked the prospect of Pakistan serving as a strategic base for anti-Soviet operations. Moreover, Pakistan has been the traditional sanctuary of Afghan refugees who revolted against the change. Islam has immense political value for Pakistan, especially obscurantist versions. And this concatenation of factors and forces plotted against the Tarakki Government. The heavily funded and well-planned propaganda against the Tarakki change over as Soviet-backed stroke was executed adroitly. And Soviet influence, the tribes were claverly told, was always anti-God. This irrebutable myth deftly propagated, panicked the victims of ignorance and prejudice. The refugee flood to Pakistan and Iran (3 million?) (2 million?) followed. Rivers of arms pured into rebel hands from the U.S. Refugee relief camps were set up on the borders of and within Pakistan. Military training for guerillas was given, weapons delivered and the millions of refugees were drugged by false propaganda and dollar doles. On top of it, a whole population of smugglers and drug racketeers flourihed on the frontiers. In short, the huge influx of Mujahideen and other brands of refugees did thrive on a trans-national drug

racket were pampered by dollar bounty and indoctrinated into armed insurrection and loot Pakistan had a windfall of American aid on the Afghan alibi It is intriguing that China too abetted the rebels Perhaps, anti Sovietism induced ideological cataract Espionage by Western powers, funding of Afghan's 'contras' in crisis, and malicious irradiation of panicky mujahideens with misleading tales of anti Islamic acts by the Afghan authorities, made the moutain country deeply divided Of course, it was all a tissue of lies and the Tarakki tragedy was a victory for Goebbelsian arts

Pakistan invaded Afghanistan with American aid, Iran did its best to use refugees for border clashes and provincial upsurges were engineered with battalions of lies The U S underwrote the military hardware and the international news war Thus the hostile external factors made Afghan defenses flounder In the provinces, the Tarakki blunders, with nascent cadres acting tactlessly, the Amin betrayal of the Revolution by stabbing from behind (the et tu brute syndrome) and the emasculation of the P D P A by splittism and extremism, led cumulatively to reverses in the rural vastnesses and regions close to Pakistan and Iran

The escalation of these follies and flaws at a time when the fledgeling Revolution was consolidating itself was predictably prone to prove fatal The historic Afghan Republic and its very sovereignty were in peril Its internal defense resources, in a self divided situation, were inadequate The first imperative of a Revolution is the strategy of survival The Soviets had a Treaty of Friendship with Afghanistan which, if ever it was to become functional, was now The Soviet troops were invited by Kabul to defend its frontiers against foreign intervention and Moscow took time by the forelock The world awoke to Russian troops taking position where Pakistan menaced Afghan territory

The Soviets had helped India, not with troops though, during the Chinese aggression India currently helps, on a humanitarian hope, Sri Lanka with Peace Keeping Forces on Colombo's request America's track record of aggressive troops and supplies against free peoples is reckless and terrible, always ready to behead independent States or to bolster up tottering thrones and tyrants The C I A is the world s most satanic artist in assasinating free governments which are not Washington's satellites (The American people are great and creative, tho') We are not analysing American militarism here or how it regards Afghan emergence as an independent democracy as

anathema. The point is that when a nation seeks self-expression, breaking the shackles of internal feudal-theocratic inhibitions and struggling against international intrigues of notorious Powers and their proxies, when it battles for national unification and for undoing the plots of hostile neighbours to sow the dragon's teeth of discord misusing God, it is inevitable that it exercises its sovereign right to ask for friendly aid, military or other, without surrendering its superemacy as a people's democracy. The Afghan leadership, caught on the deadly coils of aggression and subversion, invited the Soviets to come to its rescue and one December 27, 1979 Kabul sighed relief that Soviet troops would and did strengthen its frontiers.

Soviet might was not to be trifled with and Kremlin meant business. The U.S., China and Pakistan knew that. Nor is the Russian bear scared by the American eagle or Chinese dragon or puppet Pakistan. Never-the-less, the universe of propaganda belongs to the western media which can instantly brain-wash the nations of the Third World by subtle arts or gross exaggerations. The cult of suppressio veri and suggestio falsi is a western speciality. We have no doubt that if the Russian armies had moved in, not on invitation but in their own interests, ignoring the sovereignty of the Afghan State, condemnation is justified. No power, whatever its colour, shall violate a free country's sovereignty even if it hates its internal social system or political development. A few decades ago (Justice Iyer) had strongly criticised Soviet armies marching into Prague apprehending danger to Soviet security. Panch Sheel (Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence) bind Russians and Americans alike. But when a treaty of friendship subsists and one party is in mortal peril it is right to help, especially when aggressive enemies are intruding and/or supplying arms to enemies within deliberately designed to overthrow the Government.

Gaur, in his book on Afghanistan,[2] has perceptively pointed out how Pakistan instigated and fuelled the aggressive activities which forced Amin himself to summon military aid from the Soviet Union:

> "Everyone knows that there is no firm border called Durand Line marked on the ground. And people move about freely across this "line". During winter thousands of nomadic tribes of Afghanistan cross into Pakistan and go back with the advent of summer

> And *now*, when once they enter Pakistan, they are not allowed to go back They are backmailed into joining the counter revolutionaries or are listed down as "refugees"

When the Afghan government was *totally disappointed with* Pakistan and was completely disillusioned about its intentions, when it was clear who was pulling the strings from behind the curtain, when it was obvious that the imperialists were by proxy, fighting an undeclared war against Afganistan, Hafizullah Amin himself, not once but a number of times invited Soviet assistance under the 1978 Soviet Afghan treaty and the UN Charter The reason for the presence of a limited contingent of Soviet forces in Afghanistan has to be seen in the context of this undeclared war

Not only in the national interests of Soviet Union and Afghanistan, but also in the interests of the struggle against imperialist intrigues in this region and in order to preserve peace in the area, this step on the part of USSR was very essential

The relationship between imperialist intervention and the presence of Soviet contingent cannot be lost sight of " Pakistan's jackal role cannot also be minimised So also the Khomeni hostility At the back of it all was the U S all-out effort to go for the Afghan jugular!

Memory recalls that Amin hated and tried to liquidate the leftist faction of Karmal and plotted the assassination of his over active but under-circumspect leader Tarakki Amin was innocent of 'red' passion and was soft to the U S But the manipulated crisis made even Amin call for Soviet support to survive

What was the guilty part of the outside forces, the U S giant being the leader in the overthrow operation? What testimonial gleanings do we get from contemporary meterials We rely on Goyal (Afghanistan Behind The Smoke Screen) as source book

> "The attempts to destabilise the Revolution had started immediately after the April 1978 events It was considered a sort of preemption of the designs that America had to enlist Daoud in the ranks of the Shah of Iran and Zia ul Haq of Pakistan According to press reports of the period, during his visit to Teheran in 1978, the Chinese Foreign Minister had made a suggestion to the Shah that "he should something to prevent the consolidation of the Afghan regime". In June 1978, the NATO

Command took a decision to give full support to the rebels in Afghanistan.

"The Chinese, on their part, activised the proPeking group Shola-e-Javid and Sorha who had close contacts with the Muslim Brotherhood. These groups functioned in the nothern provinces of the Chinese-Afghanistan border. They were actively supported by Hafeezullah Amin's brother, Abdullah Amin. He was governor of the province bordering China and, on hearing the news of Amin's overthrow, tried to escape but was arrested by the Afghan security forces. He is reported to have revealed, during interrogation, that he had raised his own army comprising members of the Moslem Brotherhood, the Shola-e-Javid and other pro-Chinese groups. It was with his assistance that a number of well-armed bands, trained by Chinese and American instructors, secretly entered Afganistan from the Pakistan border in the summer and autumn of 1979. They mercilessly assassinated party cadres and teachers and destroyed schools and hospitals in the northern provinces.

"The Afghan Refugee Committee headed by former US Ambassador to Kabul, Theodore Eliot, was established to raise funds which were put at the disposal of a US citizen of Afghanistan origin, Nassery. Carter Administration announced $ 19.5 million contribution to the fund in addition to $ 25 million 'food assistance'.

According to a report in the New York Times, the Special Coordination Committee established in the National Security Council had decided to step up delivery of arms to the 'Afghan insurgents'. James Nathan, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Delaware wrote in the New York Times on September 8, 1980: "White House officials said in February that the Central Intelligence Agency had been assigned to supply the insurgents with light infantry weapons. Pervasive

> sentiment now appears to favour providng insurgents with at least some anti tank weapons and, most importantly, surface-to air missiles" [3]

After the Soviet troops entered, the U S , in indignant abundance of versatile resources, rained into Pakistan the latest and most destructive weapons and enviable flood of dollar aid It was an *undeclared war* except that after Viet Nam the Pentagon shudders to shed American blood abroad Pakistan territory was training ground, American money the appetiser It was profitable to be a 'refugee' because of daily dollar doles and opportunity for drug peddling

> "Between 1980 and 1982 arms worth 200 millions dollars were made available to the rebel gangs
> A French journal reported in 1984 that Afghan "refugees" were receiving 600 million dollar "aid" every year This did not include the assistance given by the CIA and by other sources, or that given by Britain and other imperialist and reactionary regimes
> In most cases, innocent people and even citizens of Pakistan are enroled as refugees to get the 'aid'
> Some UN officers themeselves have reported after inspection that the amounts received in the name of refugee relief are being misued A considerable portion of the cash is being misappropriated by officers Corruption is rampant
> According to official data, the enemies of the revolution have destroyed 1,814 schools, 31 hospitals, 906 peasant cooperatives, 14 000 km long telephone line, and a number of bridges The total value of all this would be 3,500 crore Afghanis or 80 crore dollars
> Such is the 'freedom struggle' which the socalled 'Mujahideens' are fighting backed by US imperialism and Pakistani reaction" [4]

The unfree Voice of Free Afghanistan set up in Pak territory was again a habitual American device of radio attack on free countries with sham stations beaming brazen untruth

The heavy investment of the U S in the "Mujahideen" strategy

was obviously an imperialist desire to get control of a land of spinal significance, viewed in the perspective of global hegemony. The Saur Revolution, if it stabilises, becomes a road-block in the designs against the Soviets. Get Afghanistan and dominate the land which gives access to everywhere. In the north, the Soviets share a border nearly 2500 KM. long. With Pakistan, a border of 2180 KM. in the east, and in the west, Iran has 820 KM. of common border exists. In geo-politics and global hegemony, the temptation to instigate rebel groups is too keen and the stakes too high for an objective costbenefit analysis. Military adventurists are poor political auditors. The White House in its wisdom, went all-out to control Kabul, regardless of the quantum of investment. Obsessions of Power have a megalomania which blinds understanding.

The myth and truth of a given situation demands discriminatory judgment and India has since the beginning taken a principled stand. Morarji Desai, a known anti-communist and the Janata Government, not allergic the American influence cannot be accused of Soviet slant or sympathy for 'red' infiltration into Afghanistan. And yet, a joint statement issued in Moscow after the visit of Prime Minister Morarji Desai, in June 1978, declared that "the Soviet Union and India firmly oppose any interference from outside forces in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

> "The Indian position had been much more explicitly stated by the Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram who said that the interference of Pakistan in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan would possibly have dangerous consequences in all the region. In a speech to the meeting of commanders held in New Delhi, he said: "There is irrefutable proof for this intervention." The then Defence Minister of India also pointed out that "Camps have been erected in the border areas of Pakistan where saboteurs have been taken under training by the imperialists and reactionary forces with an object to be sent to Afghanistan".[5]

This background belights the Soviet entry and why Kabul sent the S.O.S.

Afghan Prime Ministter Sultan Ali Keshtmund explained:

> "that it should (also) be understood that the

> presence of limited Soviet troops is the result of outside intervention, not the cause " And he emphatically added "The moment that intervention ends and we are assured that there would be no further intervention, these troops can go back" [6]

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was perceptive of the foreign fuelling of the Mujahideen refugees and told the foreign correspondents that "one of the problems facing the Government there was that the rebels were being provided with weapons which are becoming more and more sophisticated It was therfore for the Afghan Government to decide whether they should take outside help to meet such a situation "

A neat sum up of India's position was given by Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma who had led an Indian Parliamentary delegation to the 5th anniversary celebrations Speaking at the commemoration ceremony on April 26, he said

"The interaction between the peoples of Afghanistan and India have transcended periodical political developments and changes It is a relationship deeply rooted in cultural, religious, economic and political ties The welfare and progress of the Afghan people, therefore, is a matter of abiding and vital interest to India It is in this context that we perceive and react to the situation related to Afghanistan The policy and attitude of my government and my people towards Afghanistan is based on two factors First, is our historical relationship with the Afghan people and the second our own perception of developments in our region over the last several decades We firmly believe that the internal affairs of Afghanistan, and as to how it should shape its destiny, bring progress and development to its people is the sole concern of the Afghan people and this is a matter which is within their sovereign discretion Those who interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and place hurdles in the way of march to progress and prosperity of the Afghan people, do so with ulterior and outdated colonial and imperialist motives, and it is natural for the Afghan people to resist such attempts

"We are aware that the Afghan people have gone through a series of political changes in their quest for progress and development This quest found a particular impetus in the Saur Revolution, the 5th anniversary of which we are witnessing today No revolution is without attendant problems But these problems have sinister

dimension, affecting the future to meet their expansionist objectives. This approach by such forces, such countries, is not just limited to Afghanistan, but to the whole of the Gulf, the Indian Ocean, in Africa and in the Middle East. We, in India, therefore, do not look upon developments in Afghanistan in a vacuum or in isolation. We look at the situation around Afghanistan in its recent historical context".

The Indian stand has been consistent and clear and principled, right down to Rajiv Gandhi. Foreign intervention has been frowned upon.

Tarakki was followed by Amin and during this time internal mistakes of policy and execution of programmes, coupled with inefficiency and factionalism made the C.I.A. and the interventionists feel that Kabul was an easy victim to be gobbled up by the enemies of revolution, internal and external. But the hardy Afghans, committed to radical freedom and organised under the banner of the P.D.P.A,, are a tougher lot. True, the C.I.A. team coordinated the subversive operation against Afghanistan in collaboration with the Pakistani secret service and Afghan counterrevolutionary ringleaders.

Says Goyal :

> "The activities of Afghan counter-revolutionary ringleaders and of the American intelligence service in Peshawar were coordinated by the US Consul there, who was himself, a high-ranking CIA official.
>
> The Chinese special services also became active at this stage. They relied mainly on the Moslem Brotherhood which, in Afghanistan, was collaborating with pro-China groups such as the Shola-e-Javid and Sorha. It was these groups which plotted anti-government riots in Herat in March 1979.
>
> Chinese agents have been particularly active in the northern provinces of Afghanistan. They turned the 74- kilometre Chinese-Afghan border into a source of permanent tension and provocation.
>
> "A high-ranking Chinese delegation headed by Commander-in-Chief of the Chinese Air Force Jan-Tinfa visited Pakistan in the spring of 1979.

The delegation inspected certain areas of the Pakistani Afghan frontier and discussed ways and means of coordinating Anti Afghan activities with the Pakistani military authorities

"On September 24, 1981, the NBC television reported that the USA, Egypt, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and China were playing a significant role in the clandestine operations to send armaments to the counter revolutionaries of Afganistan

"Visits of western dignitaries of those areas have been frequently arranged to impress the Afghans undergoing training that the whole world is at their back Carter's National Security Adviser Brezezinsky, during such a visit, took up a gun and pointed it demonstratively towards Afghanistan In October 1981 Mrs Thatcher, the British Prime Minister visited the camps In a meeting with rebel leaders in Peshawar, she promised a generous aid of £3 million and 80 thousand

"The main base of anti Afghanistan activity had to be Pakistan although Khomeini's Iran also, with its fanatical Islamist and anti Communist rhetoric, did not offer much of obstruction The operation there however had to be conducted through the various Islamist organisations of the Afghans like the Jamiat-e Islami, Hezb e Islami, Harkat e Islami, Jubh e Milli Afghanistan It was on a smaller scale as compared to what was happening in Pakistan for various reasons First, American and CIA had become dirty words in Iran because of their support to the tyrannical rule of the Shah Secondly, the Shia fanaticism of the Mullah regime deterred many Afghans, who are mostly Sunni, from going to Iran, only the Shias from north western areas moved in that direction And yet, there were elements strongly entrenched in Khomeini's Iran who were prepared to play a role in Anti Afghanistan operations Trained personal for these operations however had to be infiltrated from Pakistan, at least in the beginning "[6]

Despite these deadly combinations and desperate incitements, Kabul survived the subversive operations. The People's Democratic Party, under the leadership of Karmal, resisted the heavy odds, corrected the revolutionary blunders and organised cohesive national resistance sufficient to feel confident that victory would belong to the Afghan, not its enemies. This is not to deny that the provinces closer to Pakistan and Iran and even other regions were distrubed areas.

Babrak Karmal and the cadres of P.D.P.A. met the challenge of the counter-revolutionary insurgents, not by fake claims and Russian arms but by positive deeds demonstrative of a unified will and ability to expose the heaps of lies which used religion as the weapon of misinformation. Truth will out, and censored and doctored untruth, distributed under high voltage propaganda, will lose the war in the end, even if it may seem to win a few battles in the beginning.

The political key to the Afghan enigma is the Democratic character of the Party. Personality cult has short mileage and fascist coercion fails after a while. Amin's authoritarianism was bound to fail because the people were not with him nor could fascist dictatorship freeze the people's urge for freedom. It was inevitable that Afghanistan should therefore opt for a Democratic Party. Nor is religion, even so strong one as Islam, very safe in a fascist system. This is evident from the words of Adolf Hitler:

> "The religions are all alike, no matter what they call themselves. They have no future - certainly none for Germans. Fascism, if it likes, may come to terms with the Church. So shall I. Why not? That will not prevent me from tearing up Christianity root and branch and annihilating it in Germany."

The only answer to puppet regimes and tyrannies in national garbs is a people-based Party with trained cadres and mass support. This great imperative was realised by the Afghan leadership which knew that without revolutionary theory there could be no revolutionary movement, and without a radical party no mass movement could be built up. It is extremely meaningful that because the P.D.P.A. kept its sights straight and high and its strategies principled and credible it was able to overcome the seemingly insuperable obstacles and preserve its inner partriotism. The Preamble of the Party

Constitution clearly reflects the higher conscience of the party leadership and it says

> "The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan is a party of a new type, it is the tried and tested, militant vanguard of the working class and all other working people of our beloved homeland Afghanistan, and is the highest form of political organisation In its work the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan proceeds from the principles of scientific revolutionary theory On a voluntary basis is units in its ranks the advanced politically conscious representatives of the workers, peasants, servicemen, intelligentsia, artisans, nomads and other working people in town and country The Democratic Party of Afganistan expresses and defends the interests of all the working people of the country
>
> "In the course of its history the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan has had its ups and down, it has passed through various stages of development, it has a hard and glorious record of struggle in many spheres social, political, organizational and ideological It was under the guidance of the PDPA that the April National Democratic Revolution was carried out
>
> "The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan is the leading and guiding force of our society, the consistent and unswerving defender of the real interests of the working class and all the other working people of our country On the basis of creatively applying a scientific world outlook and the Programme, scientifically grounded on this theory and also taking account of the experience it has accumulated, the PDPA exercises guidance of the purposeful efforts of the broad masses of the people in building a society free from exploitation and from class antagonisms, a society which will ensure rising living and cultural standards
>
> "An immutable law by which the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan lives and

> functions is the ideological and organizational unity and militant cohesion of its ranks, and also observance of consicentious discipline. Manifestations of factionalism, cliquishness and nepotism are incompatible with the Party spirit and with membership of the party.
> "In comformity with its class essence, patriotic character and world outlook our Party is an organization of devoted patriots, a defender of the country's territorial integrity, national sovereignty and real national interests, a faithful member of the international working class movement and of progressive mankind. It educates its members in the spirit of patriotism and internationalism which, in the opinion of our Party, are inseparably linked".
> (Preamble of the Party Constitution).

The history of the subsequent Plenums of the Party consolidated its experience in the revolutionary breakthrough. It must be made plain here that Afghanistan, with its diversities, insularities and sturdy democratic spirit, cannot be forced into the mould of a One-Party rule. Political pluralism is the reality of the public life of the people and a recognition of that fact has imparted an amount of flexibility to the politics of Republic.

Afghanistan is inhospitable to irreligion. Islam is a paramount fact of community life and omnipotence. At the same time, there are 'minorities' in Afghanistan. Hindus and Sikhs are very much there, although numerically small but sufficiently ancient. Oppression of such minorities undermines the strength of the polity. The P.D.P.A. in power has cognized this social calculus, with the result. that alongside of the many mosques one sees temples and gurudwaras, and devotees flocking into both. Religious pluralism is a fact of Afghan life. So also linguistic variety and peaceful co-existence among the languages and dialects. While the Pushtoons are half the populace, there are many tribes in the Afghan mountains and valleys. These diverse tribes have a traditional democracy of Jirgha or the Tribal Council. These institutions take decisions and when larger issues arise the Loya Jirgha (Great Assembly) meets as a National Assembly. Decisions taken there have a broad binding character. The religious heads are a force even in temporal life. We cannot wish away God that easy, even if Almighty has no armies.

Way black in 1958, when Joseph Stalin was asked to establish cordial terms with the Pope, he asked "How many divisions has the Pope? ' In Afghanistan, tho' the Mullahs and the Maulvis and the Ulemas have no armies, they have the hearts of the tribes with them, and, therefore, principled compromises, consistent with radical progress, are on the agenda of wise statesmanship The Karmal regime, therefore, adopted a constructive policy of utilizing the dynamic tenets of democracy with which Islam is rich and appealed the Ulemas and the Clergies to use the progressive power of Islam for the material salvation of the people Indeed, there was warm response to this move, once credibility was established and Karmal's intentions came out in positive terms to support the universal religious authority of Islam The great Prophet was not merely the founder of a great religion but also the founding father of a just social order containing revolutionary truths, democratic creeds and the goal of spiritual material uplift of all people It was a master strategy of the chastened P D P A that they were able to organise a *Conference of the Ulemas and Clergies of the D R A where the* harmony between the teachings of Islam and the objectives of the National Democratic Revolutions was resplendently accepted The Afghan revolution would have been wrecked if it had resisted Islam On the contrary, its triumph would be underwritten provided the leadership knew the principled technology of bringing out the best humanist aspects of Islam as strenghthening the Saur Revolution Having due regard to the great importance of the subject, we quote profusely and without apology from the decisions reached at the Second Conference of the Religious Order in the D R A

> ' Praise be to God Almighty who revealed a book and a guide, fluent and clear, where no possibility has been left for deviation in its guidance The book is sufficient to guide all the requirements and interests of the bondsmen of God, that is, the human kind By this book to alarm mankind from severe punishment against unfair deeds
> "To the dignitary and noble Muslims of Afghanistan inside and outside of our beloved country or wherever in the world you are
> "Please listen to our responsible voice which has timely been raised on the order of the sacred religious duty, with all attention and healthy

intellect, neutral judgement and far from evil temptation. You also obey with a sense of responsibility towards the orders and provisions of our common religion that we all conscientiously oblige ourselves to obey.

"We are composed of a large number of Ulemas of the true religion of Islam, the esteemed spirituals enjoying sincere support of the pure, mature and of the country, preachers and Imams of Takias, congregational and small mosques of the city and suburbs of Kabul and all provinces of the country, theologists and teachers of the theology schools, both State-owned and others, instructors of theology of the Kabul University, teachers of theology of the schools, judges of courts, theolgists and scholars of religious and social scinence, incharges of the theology departments of the Ministry of Education, Ulemas of the Islamic Affairs General Department, the High Council of the DRA Ulemas and Clergies including the well-known and esteemed personalities famous in virtue and piety, high-ranking official figures enjoying great respect of the people. The participants of the Second Conference of the DRA Ulemas and Clergies, after assessing and discussing the important issues of the day, inside and outside the country, particularly the issues dealing with the destiny and life of the mankind and, first of all, the destiny of the Muslims of the world as well as of our country, reached a conclusion to call the current Conference: "Islam and the Objectives of the National Democratic April Revolution". It is because to attract more attentionn of the participants for assessing this issue which has a significant impact on the life of our Islamic society of the present condition.

"The participants of the Conference, after studying the text of the Fundamental Principles, its supplement laws and reliable document received, all-sidedly and from various angles assessing this

issues concerning the national democratic April revolution, reached the conclusion that the national democratic transformation, that is, the April Revolution, has taken place only in a bid to ensure social justice in our country and remove the tyranny and oppression from the oppressed and misery stricken, needy people, who constitute the overwhelming majority of our Muslim working people, and who are deprived of their inviolable rights

"The objectives of the revolution are based on the principles of justice, equity, righteous deed, beneficence and piety, which are the outstanding specifications of man towards the just and merciful God

"Similarly, the participants of the Conference assessed the possibilities for reaching these honest objectives and reached the conclusion that the international and scientific implementation of the scientifically arranged and calculated plans of the national democratic revolution in our country are posing no damage to anybody, to be forbidden by the just Islamic, Sharia of Mohammad 'the Prophet' peace be upon him

"But the other way around, millions of poor and deprived Muslims of our country are moving from a difficult and intolerable condition to a tranquial and tolerable one and consequently a just, wise and dignified condition for all The only thing forbidden by the Islamic Sharia and considered ugly is decreasing, banishing and declining

"On the one hand, the excess and lavishness in livelihood of a minority of our compatriots are decreasing and, on the other hand, the shackles of poverty and deprivation on the feeble hands and necks of the suffering and destitute toilers are being thrown away It also removes the heavy burden of lack of justice from the weak shoulders of the wage earners and toilers who were carrying it to far and unlevelled distances against a very small wage

because they were compelled. And this, by itself, will fulfill the will of God, the gracious intention of the right-thinking people, especially the Muslims.

"The ownership of farmland would be limited and this limitation on land is not taking place in a way to bring about poverty for its owner or draw the owner out of the condition of welfare. But instead thousands of destitute, indebted and poor peasant families would be saved from death and deterioration by receiving a small size of cultivable land. In the meantime, the gross yield of the cultivable land of the country would increase several-folds which is an undeniable gain for all citizens of the country.

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"The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan on the basis of having great reverence to the sacred Islam religion, the religious manners and traditions of the people, the private possessions belonging to the sacred residents such as mosques, religious schools, the Shrines and the superfluous lands aside to the specific lots registered, are all put at the disposal of the religious learned personalities, the priests, the prechers and other religious leaders on the basis of the appendix Act No. 1, Chart 8th of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Repucblic of Afghanistan."

"According to the principles of the revolution, big share has been given to the state in the agricultural sector as well as in the area of industry in order that the state can take control of the economy of the country and in the meantime transfer the state administration to the public. This way, the Muslim population of the country will be able to take a great part in managing the economic affairs of the nation and get more profit from state-owned economy in the interest of all people of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and consequently they will be able to increase the profit and augment the area of activities in this regard.

"Now, the participants of the Conference, through

their study and observation of the aim and objectives of the national and democratic revolution, have reached the conclusion that the main policy in the area of economy is further control on wealth by the state in order to be able to remove the hardships and chronic problems of the millions of the people of the country and augment the fields and the output of agriculture commerce and industry, and deliver this great part of the national wealth to such a capable state, which will be formed by the representatives of the working and Muslim people of Afghanistan and assign it for carrying out its duties "

"*Pious and Muslim countrymen!*

Probably you will raise the question "Then what is this disorder that we see around our homeland? This insecurity, this highway robbery, these attacks on rural families, these killings and murders, destruct ions and plundering?"

"The realistic, conscious, Islamic and unanimous response of the conference is that Muslim people of our beloved country, democratic Afghanistan, have not been and are not against this revolution of justice and prosperity

"And, all these revolts and conspiracies are the outcome a interventions of international counter-revolution, that is, the regional and world reaction and imperialism, that in front of all these crimes and destructions and subversions standing are the US imperialism and reactionary countries and they have organised these destructive conspiracies against the working Muslims of our country

"Reaction and imperalism have provoked, encouraged the escapes to Pakistan and Iran and have given them fatal and destructive arms They have organised propaganda, contrary to reality of facts against the Soviet Union which in accord with the Good Neighbourliness Cooperation and Friendship Treaty, extended honourable and humanitarian assistance to the oppressed and poor

people of the country who for centuries have tested the poison of hopelessness. Under the guise of Jehad and defence of religion formed armed groups and sent them to the villages, towns and cities to murder the people. They by giving handsome amounts to a few homeless who lack human dignity and have no respect for the right of the people to live and live peacefully and assigned them as heads and commander of the counter-revolutionary groups who continue their looting and destructive acts."

"We, the participants of the Second Conference of Religious Scholars and Spiritual Figures, are of the opinion that the prevention of the process of this devilish horror is the religious duty of every Muslim, particularly, the Afghan Muslims.

"In this connection, the holy Koran determined the duties of the Muslims and entrusted to them the tasks of:

Verse No. 1

Translation :

"Whenever, a clashhand war occurs between two groups of Muslims, you should invite them to peace. If again one of these two groups resorts to aggression, you have the duty to enter to the war against the aggressive group, so to fulfil the order of the God which is peace. When by obeying the order of the God, that is, return to peace, you should make compromise by observing the justice.

because, the God Almighty attaches value to the observers of justice.

"Now, we have described briefly the objectives of the national and democratic revolution after the careful study to our Muslim countrymen. All of them are in accord with the norms of Islamic justice and deserve serious and unhesitating support.

"Therefore, when it is seen that in the clash of two Muslim groups on an issue, reality is with a side of the groups, and this group is the supporter of legacy and demands and invites for peace and security,

> then this proves the aggressiveness of the opposing side "
> "The holy Koran is the book of God, and having faith on the realities of its directions, obeying its directives and avoiding its prohibitions are the main conditions of being Muslim

It says concerning those who assassinate just and charitable people that

Verse No 2
Translation
This is the fact that inform the painful sufferings of those who disrespect the verses, sign of wisdom and justice and law of the Lord, God and consider incorrect the messengers of the God, and mercilessly kills men who invite and guide the people for observing justice These are the people whose deeds are accomplished for the benefit of this world and others are spoiled, and they are deprived from every kind of help, assistance and support

Pious Muslim of the beloved Democratic Republic of Afghanstan

We, the participants of the Second Conference of the Religious Scholars and Spiritual Figures in the famous capital of our country, the ancient city of Kabul, based on our responsibilities towards Islam and the duties which Islam has entrusted on us have honestly and benevolently expressed the results of our observance and studies by presenting satisfactory reasons which did not have any unjust and unclean intentions, to you and the Muslims of the world, in full freedomg and confirmed them with the verses of holy Koran And, we explicitly declare that

> "The objectives of the national and democratic April Revolution in our country is in full conformity with the norms principles of the holy religion of Islam, and lead the righteous struggle on the path of consolidation of social justice which is the reighteous demand of the Lord the God and whose faithful believers "[10]

We witnessed the participations of many Islamic Jurists and Clergymen at various Assemblies, thereby convincing us that from far and near the Afghans appreciatively supported the Saur

Revolution and interpreted the holy Koran and the great Prophet as a revolutionary power behind a burgeoning revolutionary order.

Awakened Ariana thus inaugurated a new chapter of history which is of creative significance because consonance with, not contradiction between, the human essence of religion and the humanism of the revolution was successfully applied by the P.D.P.A. leadership.

Likewise, the D.R.A. also proved that Soviet friendship meant more than Russian military hardware. Socialist humanism brings in new winds of social justice in institutions and perspectives. Both of us visited farms and factories, museums, schools and mosques and met men from different cross-sections, businessmen, Indian, foreigr and native, and our own embassy officials. It was convincingly brought home to us as our inference from actual observations that everywhere there was a great awakening, a keen desire for peace, a deep wish for development of resources, a great anguish that the refugees were being misled and that they must be weaned from the maryuana of misinformation. All was quiet on the Kabul front, the politics of peace was on the lips and hearts of leaders of different parties and of independent thinkers and jurists. We met judges and lawyers who did not belong to the P.D.P.A. and discussed in confidence many things about the party in power and the turbulence in the provinces. Of course, we met heads of many institutions, leaders of youth power, of woman power and of P.D.P.A. power and representatives of other parties. While emphases differed, a broad consensus was present that One-Party rule was not good and national division should be bridged soon to avoid incalculable damage. What was needed was a democratic front, with liberal political pluralism and a great campaign for healing the Mujahideen malady and to persuade the return of the refugees back to their beloved villages.

> "Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself hath said,
> This is my own, my native land!
> Whose heart hath ne'er with him burn'd,
> As home his footsteps he ha th turn'd
> From wandering on a foreign strand!
>
> - SIR WALTER SCOTT.

The revolutionary changes of April 1978 are irreversible.

Revolutions rarely go backwards unless the captains bid farewell to dialectics After the wobbling beginning under Tarakki and the dubious spell under Amin, the P D P A got on to a sober and steady course of navigation during the Karmal span based on two cardinal guidlines of far reaching meaning for the Afghan future, viz the policy of National Reconciliation and the politics of the National Front No dialectical student of Afghan and world affairs and of the materialist clashes of feudal fundamentalist forces, aided and abetted by imperialist interests, with the explosive aspirations of the suppressed masses for national liberation, ideologically catalysed by democratic politics and strategically befriended by the Soviets, will miss the deep social upheaval of the last decade in that mountain country The old order has gone for ever, the new order struggles to be born An independent people, with tribal autonomy and diversity cultural tenacity and Islamic identity, resistance to overlordship and popular jirgha administration, cannot be centrally subjugated or forcibly regimented by rulers with exotic ideologies or foreign weaponry At the same time, the love of the homeland is strong and territorial integrity a patriotic passion Freedom from feudalism, not from holy Islam and tribal customs, political pluralism not the politics of killing, brotherhood and equality instinct in Islam and harnessing of progressive priestly influence as a rural reform process these and like elements in the social calculus are too important for any radical strategist to ignore Impatience is the last virtue of a revolutionary and mobilisation of the country's masses is the first task of a political catalyst Afghan society, notwithstanding its stagnant rusticity and widespread illiteracy, has been victim of poverty and privation and ripe for progressive, dynamic changes But three conditions must actively coexist for any big leap forward Objective conditions and mass militancy, strategies which are realistic and feasible in the given consciousness of the broad community these are vital, lest one ultra radical step forward should push the pace two steps back Sensitive leadership ever alert, never dogmatic, capable of changing strategies if things go wrong, making independent audit of the forces at play, monitoring the effectiveness of measures and resistance factors and taking judgments to out manouvre hostile strategems by counter revolutionary operations, these are needed for crisis engineering Even principled compromises and acts of far sighted statesmanship even minor surrender to the people's primitivism to win them over or

wean them away are the mark of mature leadership. What a revolutionary activist needs is not copy book ideology and dogged refusal to see the hard facts on the ground but an incorruptible cadre of unfailing obedience and capability to reach, meet and harness the human potential to the cause of the revolution. And Revolution does not mean expropriation and nationalisation, commune living and opium of anti-religion and, regardless of the zigzag climb to the precipice, rush to the steep peak to roll down and bury the cause.

The Ariana Inquilab, from the stagnation of ancient centuries, where time ticked too slow and tyranny of many shades and degrees had become a way of life on to the popular realisation of the right to a new life and a new future using their own vast material and study human resources, - that was dauntless challenge of change, a blend of realism and radicalism, of a reverence for the cultural values rooted in the past, the canalisation of elder and younger energies, including of the Ulamas and Clergies, to the cause of the revolutionary locomotion of revolution in action. This was the Afghan tryst with destiny to redeem which was the pledge of the people. The hour of final bid for power came a decade back. The summons now is to consolidate and build on the Saur Revolution, but a united nation is the sine qua non of success.

[1]Vinod Sethi, 'Revolution ' Brigns About Emancipation of Women' Round the World: Afghanistan visited, *Voice of Corporate World* Vol. 1 No 3 p-27
[2]B.R.Gaur Afghanistan Expanding Social Base of Revolution (1987) p-44
[3]Behind D.R,Goyal Afghanistan: Behind the Smoke Screen (1984) pp. 13-14
[4]*Supra* note 2 at p-47
[5]*Supra* note 3 at p-37
[6]*Ibid* p-12
[7]*Ibid* p-12
[7]*Ibid* p-4-5
[8]*Ibid* pp 115-119
[9]The Great Quotations: Complied by GEORGE SELDES-9th Edn. 1976 p-741
[10]Text of The Religious Order: Second Conference of the Ulemas and Clergies of The Democratic Republic Of Afghanistan

CHAPTER IV.

THE AFGHAN MARCH : NEW VOICES, OLD NOISES, FRESH PROMISES :

> "The woods are lovely, dark, and deep, But I have promises to keep, And miles to go before I sleep And miles to go before I sleep"
>
> —(ROBERT FROST)

We here capsulate and recapitulate what has alreday been said, so that we may take off to the present and to the future, with an eye on the prospects for human rights, advance of the democratic process and fulfilment of Afghan destiny in the comity of nations

The Ariana panorama and the Saur revolutionary drama, rushing and rising to a crescendo of hectic events, are a fascinating focus for any creative understanding of Afghan political development, including people's participation, imperialist operations and Soviet responses The saga of a feudal, tribal, ulema led people composed of diverse tribes but unified by Islam, leaping to a radical democratic liberation is an epic experiment of people's victory in a mountainous crucible of crimson chemistry But political follies, like acids burn, even blister, and when primitive peace and ulemoid authority are rudely jolted by a militant upsurge of social justice, some rash leap or wrong over kill will spoil or make a mess or break up everything like a bull in a china shop And that is the windfall for neo imperialism and fundamentalist feudalism to rouse revolts, raise the banner of 'religion in danger', fabricate a Mujahideen phenomenon and terrify the world with exaggerated propaganda of new red' menace, Afghan freedom in manacles, their human rights harried and Soviet invasion and occupation of an innocent nation Armed rebellion from neighbouring refugee territory is then sought to be justified as patriotic duty to the Fatherland Forgery of events, falsehood bellowed thro' electronic and other media brain wash the world into

the moral inevitability of American dollar shower and munitions rivers for restoration of Afghanistan for Afghans. Such is the stuff of media—made stories which aptly answer Mathew Arnold's furious words : 'That huge Mississippi of falsehood called history'. The U.S., never-the-less, is a Big Power in many senses and is the global engineer of military manipulation where its 'vital interests' are affected. And President Carter did declare Afghanistan a part of geography where American vital interests were involved. That is the 'contras' syndrome under different labels. Pakistan and some political brokers of Afghanistan have vast vested interest in this American spending. Be that as it may, this 'contras' syndrome is history's heavy price for undertaking deep-going social changes, shaking the masses out of the opium factor of die-hard heritage into self-determination and self-government. Reactionaries will fight last-ditch battles and ready 'aid' will be forthcoming from Washington with turn-key projects for overthrow. However, it is also a reality that large numbers of people honestly flee the drastic radicalism of the nascent transformation when imposed on half-literate, religious, study tribesmen. And this refugee phenomenon is catalysed by Pakistan proximity and U.S. bounty as well as Ayatollah geo-politics from the Iran of Khomeini. Another aggravation is the simian adoption of Soviet-model institutions and exotic politics into Afghan country with its traditions, religious faiths, land ownership and tribal life-styles and thoughtways.
Even Stalin has warned :

> "The export of revolution is nonsense, Every country makes its own revolution if it wants to, and if it does not want to, there will be no revolution."
>
> —JOSEPH STALIN

The strength of a revolution is in the assimilation of its essence by the masses and their ability to withstand whole lies, and, worse, half-lies ! Its success lies in the strategy of its leadership and the quality and commitment of its cadres. Here mistakes prove expensive, egregious errors, seemingly necessary, explode, dividing a people in an agonising surgery. Tribal fission weakens the Revolution and constructive fusion paves the way for dignity and redoubled vigour. Power shared, within a formula of Operation Coalition without Abdication of People's Democracy, is the desideratum of social dialectics, after long years of blood, toil, tears and sweat. To witness

people weave their own history, not as a finished garment presented by theoreticians with foreign Know how but by training them to be the architects of their own Kismet is a process which calls for careful political artistry and patient militantisation of the masses Revolution hurried is Revolution buried There are Russo philes who fancy that a Soviet standing army in a foreign country is proletarian internationalism No, never

A flash back to our landing

The Indian Airlines flew us faultlessly into the mountain ringed city where we were duly received by representatives of our host government and by PROFESSOR G S MASOUN the President of the Afghan Lawyers' Association known as a good friend for sometime past The Indian Ambassador, who had been informed about our visit, was kind enough generously to send his representative to help us at the airport in case of need The sun was rising above the mountains which held the valley city captive and Nature was gentle, green and bracing But the airport itself bore testimony to a military preparedness Hospitality was writ large in the faces of our friends, and from the V I P lounge we were conducted by car to the Oberoi International, now known by a different name Hotel Mailmapal, symbolic of the Saur Revolution We had separate suites and all the needed comforts which were showered on us The hotel and the restaurant wore a deserted look although the rooms were trim, the food was good, and the staff sufficient to look after the guests even if all the numerous rooms were full Something had happened between then and now which explained the leap from the feudal past to the crimson present difficult to span without fuller exploration The Dawood Najib gap was the riddle of the Revolution

Time was when Afghanistan was on the white tourist map Justifiably, the snowy mountains, the quaint people, the rich variety of fruits and nuts, the monuments and the relaxed, tho' poverty stricken life of men naive, religious and dressed in indigenous diversity, was poetry indeed The hotels were full, the bazars buzzed with trade ulemas were powerful, women were beautiful but barred behind burquas and condemned to bonded labour, feudal primitivism and penury was writ large and the economy was bankrupt and tourism being the main source, people were hungry for foreign currency, which vanished with April 1978 Industrialization

was not on the agenda, universal education and employment for the common people hardly figured in the pre-Saur Government's priorities. Politics, where people were a participative factor, and secular institutions with social justice or gender justice or juvenile justice, were forgotten topics. The social base of monarchical Afghanistan was narrow and the people were alienated from their own natural riches and fundamental freedoms. But sometimes, even slaves cling to their chains, as Gandhiji pointed out.

The staff in the Oberoi were frank. Time was when the hotel was full, tips were attractive, but who got all the profits ? The glitter of the shops made Kabul streets busy but who made all the money from the goods imported and exported ? There were palatial houses, but where did the common folk live and how were they dressed when Afghanistan was freezing ? Who owned the lands and the women ? Who controlled the foreign policy and the development direction of the State ? To freeze the people's freedoms, to dwarf their potential progress, to preserve their insular medievalism, to deny them their rightful share in the natural resources, to banish the women folk from the future that belongs to them and the higher education which brings out the latent genius of the Afghans in all spheres—this is not nationalism. Freedom has a goal. The glamour of tourist dollars and the glitter of business riches, confined to a small sector, cannot buy a whole people long steeped in backwardness.

Hard-working and sturdy, the Afghans have a future. The Loya Jirgah is democracy in action. The tribes collectively speak thro' their jirgahs. Allah, the Merciful, wants peace and prosperity, freedom and humanism, not suppression and drudgery nor perpetual illiteracy and absence of medical and other facilities which make life a joy. The monhood of the Patan has the title to be himself. He and she have the right to unfold their personality and steer the wheels of State and settle the political system they want, not what other Powers Yankee or Russie—prescribe for them to facilitate plunder of their resources or influence their policy to suit other's interests. This is the social essence of People's Democracy for Afghanistan. Politically conscious intellectuals bent on breaking their bondage and carving out their future with creative intelligence, rode to power, Afghan Independence got the oxygen of a Democratic Republic. This is the political essence of the Saur Revolution stripped of its wayward, wobbling voyages. But the enemy struck with no holds barred when the steel will to change became clear. And Karmal was a match for the new challenges.

The Tarakki hurry was the rash rush of revolutionary indiscretion The errors after the April Revolution brought the hostile force together Fake 'anti Allah' policy and false anti Sovietism were concocted The rebel refugee influx became a paying proposition for the Zia Ul Huq regime The fundamentalist fury and the clerical stranglehold were fully exploited But history does not always obey imperial or regal masters The gravest hour of the Saur Power was reversed by the twin projects of instant Soviet support and the evolutionary phase of the Revolution Karmal and the P D P A made a self-critical apprasial and recaptured the dynamic of radical democracy, avoiding the disastrous quantum leap of his predecessor The counter revolutionaries were held at bay, reforms in many social and economic spheres were inaugurated and the progressive changes broadened Errors once discovered, the struggle for liberation could be intensified

President Karmal, tho' now no longer a byword in the P D P A , had played a historic part in turning the tide Jawaharlal Nehru once told Kruschev

> "You don't change the course of history by turning the face of portraits to the wall "

He retired with glory, tho' he became somewhat ineffective precisely when the Mujahideen crisis was escalating, the Russians were wishing to withdraw with circumspect steps, some Afghans felt the Soviets were staying too long and American pressure via Pakistan was reaching a higher pitch A vigorous statesmanship and dynamic drive in stewardship was the felt necessity Then came Dr Najibullah as Gen Secretary of the Party

Candour whispers that Karmalites, a small but intelligent group, still feel that the former President did not need to be put on the retired list But they do accept the remarkable capabilities of Dr Najib justifying his vanguard role It is fair to emphasize that the highest *honour of the Order of the Sun of Freedom was conferred on Babrak* Karmal The Decree of the Presidium of the Revolutionary Council reads

> "To honor his outstanding role in the development of the revolutionary movement in Afghanistan, his distinguished services rendered to the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and the State of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and his

fruitful activity for the consolidation of the defence power of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, strengthening of national independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, promoting and strengthening unity, brotherhood and union of all nationalities clans and tribes of the country and expansion of fraternal friendship and cooperation between the people of Afghanistan and other countries.

The presidium of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan resolves that :

To Comrade Babrak Karmal General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and President of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan shall be awarded the highest order of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

"The Order of the Sun of Freedom."

Afghan history would not and could not and did not obliterate the Babrak chapter altho' when the need for a more dynamic policy and comprehensive understanding of the revolutionary process demanded it, Dr. Najib, a leader with a creative intelligence, dialectical grasp of Afghan developments and brave will to carry forward with a vision of action which marks out a social scientist who is also a revolutionary artist, was made the Gen. Secretary and eventually the President.

In an hour-long discussion Justice Iyer with President Karmal the impression gained was of a political leader with dialectical discipline, self-critical acceptance of errors, willingness to change course and preparedness to submit to the paramountoy of Party judgement. He agreed that land reforms were vital for Afghan progress but the implementation of the project suffered from haste, tactless excess and cadre bossism, during the Tarakki tenure. They have since been corrected and the peasantry has greeted this land liberation. Lands wrongly taken were returned. Village committees were constituted to supervise just distribution of land and water.

The dimension of the agrarian re-distribution and peasant justice is best guaged from statistics collected by Gaur :

"*In the total* 6,52,00,000 hectares land that Afghanistan had only 78,00,000 hectares were cultivable (1 hectare = 2 741 acrea and 1 acre = 484 square yards or 43,500 squares feet) About 3,80,00,000 *hectares is pasture land, 20,00,000 hectares are covered by forests* And the rest comprises of mountains, roads and residential houses Out of the 78,00,000 hectares of land that was cultivable, only about 38,00,000 was *actually under cultivation*

"So far as irrigation was concerned only about 35,00,000 hectares of land was irrigated and 43,00,000 hectares of land depended on rains for cultivation But precipitation in Afghanistan is very low

"Before the revolution 45,00,000 hectares of land was privately owned and 33,00,000 hectares was govt owned land

"About 8,05,000 peasant families owned 61 percent or 11,00,000 hectares of land at the rate of an average 2 hectares or less holding per family Around 1,25,000 families owned 10 4 per cent or 7,02,000 hectares of land at the rate of 4 1 to 6 hectares per family, 1 09,000 families possessed a total of 20,00 000 hectares of land at the rate of 6 hectares or more per family

"About 90 percent of population depended one way or the other on land, but 20 per cent of them had not land Just 5 per cent of the population held more than 50 per cent land About 1000 families held 58,000 hectares of land 300 families were such that each one of them held 200 or more hectares of land

"*And then Afghan feudalism had another facet Even the water* resources were the property of landlords If an ordinary peasant had land, he depended on the landlord for water

"*But the revolution and the consequent land and water reforms* brought about a radical change in rural life 3,30,500 families got land of their own for the first time as a result of these reforms The new government cancelled all the debts of the peasants that accounted to 70 crore The new government raised the price of cotton, sugar beet and wheat which the peasants produced and reduced the price of chemical fertilisers, and agricultural implements *which the peasants needed to increase agricultural production* "

Illiteracy (90%) was a bane of Afghan rural life and boon for the mullah hold on the masses On this front a lot of work has been done during the last five years to educate people and combat illiteracy Since the begining of revolution 1,265,000 persons have become literate currently 1,220 schools and lycees are functioning throughout the country in which over 700,000 students are studying

In a period of six years from 1980 to 1986 the enrollment of children in kindergardens and other pre school institutions has increased from 4000 to 18000. Over 17 million text books have been printed in Dari, Pashtu, Uzbek, Turkman and Baluchi languages in post revolution years.[2].

Refering to post revolution changes in education Samad Qayumi Minister of Education observed.

Prior to the April Revolution not many children could receive education although the 1931 Constitution had proclaimed compulsory elementary education in Afghanistan. However, in practice during the 47 years only 10 per cent of school-age children attended schools, and, according to the available data, by 1978 over 92 per cent of boys and 98 per cent of girls were illiterate, 80 percent of the children enrolled in schools were from well-to-do families. Today, 40 per cent of our students come from peasant families, 35 per cent from artisan and 5 per cent from workers' families. One of the main aims of the April Revolution has been to achieve universal primary education. But under the conditions of repulsing the undeclared war, only 30 per cent of school-age children are admitted to primary schools.

Moreover, most of the schools in the past were located in the centres of the provinces and village children had often to come from far away to be able to attend a school. Therefore, 65 per cent of boys and 97 per cent of girls attended only city schools. It should be pointed out that during the post-revolution years out of the schools constructed, 80 per cent have been established in the rural areas, especially in the border provinces.

Over and above, teachers were among the most neglected stratum of the state employees. It was quite common in the past that if a state employee in another branch was to be punished, he was simply appointed a teacher. This was the cause why eighty-five per cent of teachers had no special and even secondary education. Only fifteen per cent of teacher with higher education had received some kind of professional training. All these factors resulted in very low quality of education in Afghanistan. UN in a world survey of educational levels had placed Afghanistan as 127th.

After the revolution a great importance was attached to the teachers' role in bringing up the young generation and important

measures were adopted to improve the teachers' living standard During the last 9 years, over 10,000 qualified teachers, have graduated from the teachers' training institutions The Central Institute for Completing Teachers' Specialization was also established, which so far has conducted long and short term seminars on new methods of education for over 80 per cent of the teachers of the country [3]

Health care and medical facilities have vastly increased Sports, likewise, is freshening up the youth It is a thrill to see young girls of varying ages, handsome and modern, going about without inhibitions but with sober decency, doing higher education and technological courses like in any western or socialist country The Afghan is tall and stately, fair and healthy, what with mountain air and fruits and nuts and Nature in all her abundant beauty promoting the people's well being But the Afghan woman and child are God's loveliest

A small anecdote here In the late fifties, my wife and I passed thro' Kabul to Tashkent In the afternoon glow we went up a winding road to a garden where Babur's tomb attracted us A charming girl was walking in the distance but as soon as her eyes fell on us she drew down her veil to punish her muslim face She spoke a few bashful words to my wife who knew Urdu but her fair figure suffered the sentence of face eclipse Next day in the plane we found this damsel as a fellow traveller to Tashkent As the plane took off she gave freedom to her rosy face by lifting the veil Now, no one will rebuke me for the liberty of taking off that cruel cover, now I am free from mullah suffocation, she confessed Just imagine how now the glorious gender is soberly free, and girls are doctors, teachers, from the bonded labour of the conjugal home and enjoy the title to egalite without western vulgarity

We see a new nation on the march with unity and determination and political direction Gaur sums up this

"Even prior to revolution Soviet assistance to Afghanistan was considerable And "aid" was available from USA and UN too But the difference was that the aid from western capitalist countries and sources was invariably a tied aid and was used to drain out the resources of Afghanistan for private projects Afghanistan remained a backward country steeped in poverty

"Now planning is aimed at supervising the various sectors of economy and pave the way for their growth-both in industry and in agriculture.

"Planning is done by the planning board—of course after a serious discussion in the party, the front and the mass organisations. There is a vice-chairman of the board. But all the ministries are to implement this plan.

"The first plan initiated after the April 1978 revolution was full of shortcomings and could not be successfully implemented. But in the second evolutionary phase of the revolution that commenced in 1979, planning was made more scientific. In the beginning the government encountered serious difficulties. People were very much restive. The anarchy during Amin's regime had disrupted the entire economy. The enemies of revolution, the imperialists and their camp followers and the saboteurs had ruined the economy.

"Despite those formidable difficulties and when all the 'aid' from western capitalist sources was shut out and an undeclared war was on, Afghanistan's achievements during 1981-82 and 1985-86 were really astounding.

"During the five years 1981-1986 the national income rose by 11 per cent and it was now more than what obtained in 1978-79. Much of this increase in national income was contributed by the state and the joint sectors. Production rose by 47 per cent in these sectors during 1980-81 and 1985-86. The contribution of these sectors to the economy in 1985-86 was 20 per cent. Industrial production rose by 48 pe cent, 48 per cent, rise in construction sector was 87 per cent and income from trade went up by 22 per cent. As compared to 1980-81, industrial production grew by 25 per cent in 1985-86. Of this, the state and joint sector contribution was 41 per cent. In certain sectors like electricity and energy, natural gas, cement, chemical fertiliser, flour, meat, bread and bakery products, the increase in production was considerable when compared to the position prior to the revolution. The rise in income from trade was 34 per cent and that from food products was 14 per cent. Between 1980-81 and 1985-86 transport facilities improved by 17 per cent.

During 1981-86, the government had done a lot to improve the lot of the people. Some 300 crore Afghanis were spent to raise the wages of workers and employees of the state sector. Their wages in 1985-86 were 2.4 times more than those in 1978-79. The workers and employees are provided material assistance in other ways too. For

them and the defenders of revolution a post retirement pension scheme has been introduced Government subsidsed the lunch given at work place to the extent of 33 per cent

"And all these successes were registered in spite of the unprecedented rise in defence expenditure the extreme backwardness and low productivity inherited from the past and in spite of certain shortcomings in the working of some of the government departments The loss accruing from the destruction caused by the counter revolutionary gangs amounted to 4000 crore of Afghanis Capitalist countries and the institutions allied to them have stopped all aid Financing of even on going projects was stopped

"Afghanistan could overcome all these hurdles only because of the selfless help rendered by the Soviet Union The land of Lenin has assisted in constructing about 65 big projects Soviet assistance is unprecedented in setting up state transport undertakings, in generating electricity and energy, in the production of fuel, light industry, food products, in agriculture and irrigation, in building hospitals and houses, in constructing and repairing roads, in developing communications system, and in training Afghanistan's own national skilled cadres

During the last five years industrial production has gone up by 25 per cent when compared to that of 1980 81 The rise in output of natural gas, coal, chemical fertiliser, cement, cotton and wool in the state and joint sectors has been quite impressive

The private sector products yarn, chemical fibre, plastic footwear, paints, pesticides, soap, non alcoholic soft drinks, and medicines Private sector industry is only small scale industry and accounts for 52 per cent of total industrial output of the country" [4]

Industrialization is visible advancing So too agriculture and irrigation And all this in spite of the 'contras' and the Pak engineered war turmoil Says Gaur

"The trade between India and Afghanistan is of an order of three crore dollars India has agreed to send experts Tea and medicines go from here and we get dry fruits and handicrafts from Afghanistan Afghanistan neds buses very badly But Pakistan has created hurdles in transporting them even though this will bring quite substantial earnings to Pakistan Pakistan is depriving itself of the income that would have accrued to it

"Afghanistan buys Tata buses from India and these have to be

insignificant or inimical. It would be wrong to suggest that there are no wise and good men among the mullahs, but the significant point is that training and circumstances aggravate the limitations of the mediocre who are the great majority.

"There is an awesome multitude of detailed rules for the conduct of private and civil life which has to be learned by the mullah, and such is the number and complexity of these rules that the ordinary citizen who wishes to conduct his life in accordance with Koran and Sunni has no option but to seek the mullah's guidance. Indeed, the Muslim's word for his priesthood, in the Sunni if not Shi'a persuation, is ulama or 'knowers'. The mullah has often been the only focus of law and learning in many a village and small town."[6]

Amanullah did allow fresh winds of reform to blow and altho' mullahs fought and replaced him, the changes he wrought were not wiped off. Even so, any social realist and even dialectical materialist would accept the wide and devout prevalence of Islamic faith and would take congizance of this sacerdotal factor while planning for national reconstruction, political and economic. Tarakki stumbled on this sensitive issue because his government, while not interfering with Islam, failed to emphasize that religion was fully protected and the mullah propaganda was more to keep their strangle-hold on the economy. And the wily counter-revolutionaries spread the wild story that the Government was communist and Islam would be extinguished. The Soviet support to the regime was used as irrefutable proof of the godlessness of the regime. The soft underside of the Tarakki, Amin, Karmal revolution was its vulnerability to the felony of anti-Islam based on its crimson association with the Soviet Union. This was media manufacture spread under high pressure, with high-tech. strategies and huge funding. What matters is not *truth*, against which the fanatic masses had been vaccinated, but myth with which they were duly injected, popularised by electronic and other devices, alleging excesses of Russian pollution. Three million people of various tribes were mobilised in Pakistan and two million in Iran with the result that God had a fanatic following and the nation was split on this question in the provinces. Stories of mosques being destroyed, Islam being alienated, religious leaders being deprived of authority, of Kafir power in Kabul and the country being controlled by Russian military presence were propagandised with the vigour of a versatile war of univeracity, globally waged with special focus on the rebel-refugee tribes. Fake demolitions of

transported from Bombay by ship to the Soviet Union and from their carried by road to Kabul The escalates the transport cost and the trade is suffering

"During this plan, new progress will be achieved in the field of education It is proposed to make primary education universal and complusory by the end of 1990-91

"The number of school going children will rise 2 2 times and their strength in elementary schools will increasel 8 times

"Medical facilities will also expand during this plan And it is provided in this plan that arrangements will be made to extend medical aid to nomadic tribes also Mobile health units will be created for this purpose that will work under the provincial medical institutions

"The number of beds in the hospitals will go up by 35 per cent during the plan The number of doctors will rise 1 9 times and the strength of para medical staff will increase 1 8 times The number of pharmacists will go up 1 5 times

"Fresh achievements will be made in the field of technical education The number of workers acquiring technical and vocational training will increase 3 6 times and the number of those studying in professional and technical educational institutions will go up 3 1 times "[5]

Walk anywhere in and out of Kabul, you see a hopeful people, a sturdy race, a programme of all round development Civilian contentment is a solid defense against covert and overt aggression On the hunt for discontent the malcontents hit upon Islam So the Mujahideen movement was seized upon by the counter revolutionaries to organize a Waterloo against the Saur Power The Islamia was incited by propaganda and the Soviet connection was fully exploited The rebel refugee flood was motivated by the spirit of jehad and millions fled to the frontiers of Pakistan and Iran Social realism tells us that Islam in Afghanistan is invoulably sacred Many centuries ago a great civilization flourished there under the Kushan Kings Central Asian hordes invaded and destroyed these great achievements While these Arab conquests were not consolidated the spiritual essence of the Islamic religion lasted because of its great appeal based on universal brotherhood and deep humanism The influence of the cultures of India, Persia and Arabia produced many glorious creations in Afghanistan and the human spirit blossomed in this mountain climate This lofty chapter

was later choked with Genghis Khan and Tamerline marching into this hallowed terrain with the forces of blood and iron. Islam, which in its finest era had been creative culturally and spiritually, became a religion of the sword and of intolerance in the hands of fundamentalist clerics and violent conquerors wearing the fez cap. Superstitious worship of pirs, khankahs and graves replaced the dynamics urge for attaining knowledge and perfecting arts.

When religion becomes the opium of the people, social authoritarianism and explosive obscurantism dominate the community. Religion can also be a dynamic force of spiritual liberation and social justice, if the divine flame of its deep humanism burns bright. But Afghanistan had to face a twilight phase best described by Goyal :

"People resigned themselves to the authority of Khans and tribal chieftains who exploited them in the name of religion with the help of mullahs. There emerged a combination of the tribal warlord and the religious priest; the combine was more interested in maintaining power and authority than in the spread of enlightenment. A new kind of slavery was consecrated by making the peasants and nomads believe that God had created them to serve their superiors. The hierarchical authority—of the Khan over the tribes or community, of the family chief over the family and of men over women-found sanctity and support in the interpretation of the Holy Koran given by the priests.

"Islam has no ordained priesthood but here in Afghanistan a hereditary priesthood developed; tracing descent from the family of the Prophet became a common pastime of the priests. The family connection give them greater authority than knowledge and wisdom. The kind of religion that grew has been described by J.C. Griffiths in following words :

"The original thinker, particularly in Sunni Afghanistan, is looked on as a dangerous man, for the whole pattern of religious learning is based on a process of repetitive ingestion and regurgitation, generation after generation, of the same arguments and doctrine with no attempt to adapt them to changing circumstances. Such a dogmatic process of instruction, exercised on those generally drawn from the lower and peasant class, tends to lead to bigotry and narrow-mindedness, in things temporal as well as spiritual. Anything which falls outside the compass of recorded knowledge and has no precise precedent is, for the mullahs, either

mosques and rapid rumour of mullahs being persecuted were the armour of hostile forces. Surely, anti-revolution was kept at while heat to cement the tribes altho' they were otherwise unfriendly *inter se*. A unity based on hatred of the revolution and a hatred fuelled by deception could break up provided the ignorant refugees knew the facts and were not drugged by the scare that Islam was in danger. The Karmal—Najib era was so solicitous about the clergy, the mosques and Islamic Affairs for which even a separate Ministry was constituted.

The Afghan peasant was a patriot, loved his humble hearth and warm home and simple tribal life. He never liked the exotic exile in Pakistan. He would return to his village once he realised that his dear, deep-rooted religion was safe and that he was welcome in his beloved country and that his native land was *not* under Russian occupation. To deliver *this truth* was the only principled strategy to save the Saur Revolution and to make every Afghan an active participant in the People's Democracy which belonged to him as birth-right.

The year of the shelter has found honest, tho' humble, fulfilment in Kabul, the most crowded city of the country. None is homeless tho' many live in mud huts. A little living tenement for everyone is a big step for a backward, unequal society. So also clothing. Not a child nor adult nor aged or disabled person without protestive clothes. We went into bazars, streets, bylanes and inner areas of expanding Kabul but the basic human needs are met. Economic democracy in an indigent society we found writ large with none neglected, the young cared for best and the handicapped receiving special attention. Social justice was seeping thro' the have-not human layers.'

Never-the-less, thro' media-magnified misinformation America pumped into the news universe tales of atrocities and violation of human rights that even the United Nations Agencies were persuaded to make adverse reports based on half-truths and fabricated lies which were swallowed glibly in a hurry to portray the Karmal Government as the enemy of democratic rights and fundamental freedoms. Tennyson's lines are apt :

> "That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought with outright, But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight".

Lies are the mortar that bind the prepared mind of the superficial reader into the anti-socialist masonry.

The fact of the matter is that the rebels did the violations and caused the turbulences, but the Government was changed with crimes against the people because Kabul had not the resources to reach the western media nor the power to influence the seemingly neutral UNESCO Commission and officialdom fed often on American diet.

At this stage it may be pertinent to examine briefly what the Special Rapporteur has started on the human rights status in Afghanistan. An apparently objective brush but biassed paint ! But even U.N. men should be somewhat judicial when rendering verdicts and not lend the weight of their authority to a one-sided version.

The United Nations Organisation, often weak or wilting and amenable to western pressure at times is still the highest hope of humanity, realistically speaking. Its agencies, even if misused or paralysed by influential Powers, command some credibility. Therefore, the prejudice or distortion of a Special Repporteur, if projected into his Report, may do unwitting harm difficult to repair even when the truth is laid bare later. All the more reason why great care must be exercised when Human Rights inquiries are made by U.N. Agencies, not merely to collect facts comprehensively but also to shed all shades of partiality. It is a pity that the Special Rapporteur has largely allowed himself to be swept into conclusions by heavy reliance on Pakistan-based versions. The hostile Report on the Human Rights happenings in Afghanistan prepared by Mr. Felix Ermacora in accordance with Commission on Human Rights Resolution 1985/38, however, became a campaign document to condemn the Kabul cable as culpable violators of international law. A closer examination, in meaningful consultation with Afghan Government, would I dare say, have resulted in a more balanced Report. I assert so, because I have myself been to Kabul and nearby places in January 1986 and March 1987. To build a case of massive homicide of Afghan Human Rights, aided by evidence and perceptions flavoured by Pakistan is to load the dice heavily against Kabul and Moscow. The coloured information and the tendentious material the Rapporteur facilely collected from Pakistan and Pak-controlled provinces on the borders of Afghanistan would necessarily have led to verdicts agreeable to the Washington and Islamabad. Small wonder the Special Repporteur held against

Afghan rulers and his heart was moved to tell the United Nations

"The plight of these refugees obviously touches the humanitarian conscience of mankind, but it also creates a heavy economic burden for those countries, such as Pakistan, that find themselves having to undertake the international humanitarian obligations imposed upon them by the situation" [8]

The villain of the piece was, identified by Mr Ermacora to be the Soviets, altho' it was conclusive that on Kabul's special request to the Kremlin, based on a treaty of friendship, the troops were sent to help the Karmal Government resist the Zia forces and the Mujahideens fighting with U S weapons

Apparent, the clouded vision of the Special Rapporteur, unwittingly tho', suffered partial obscuration because of the pathological geo-politics of the venue from where he made the inquiry, so much so he could hardly see Pakistani sorties, violence and rebel attacks on peaceful tribes in several provinces under Governmnt control and brutal killings of civilians during these encounters Nor could he discover in these provocative and aggressive acts any violation of human rights or breach of international law bearing on national sovereignty He swallowed what he was told and never critically scanned the obvious possibility of Mujahideen and Pakistani savagery and fury

> Orwell's barbed words come to mind
> "To see what is in front of one's nose needs
> a constant struggle "

And when the instigator and appetiser of aggressive turbulence, in this case, Pakistan, is the sacred and sole source of facts, 'truth' is an easy casualty British truth in India when Indians were struggling non violently for Independence, held Gandhi and all freedom fighters guilty of lawless disorder and violence and what not The blacks of America, under Martin Luther King Jr and others, discovered how the police and the courts had perfected the art of administering injustice, hanging the coloured and holding the whites the victim Hitler too had his 'truth' and Goebbels put it out with daring mendacity All Jews, from birth, were guilty and deserved to be gassed to death, according to Nazi faith Reagan called the Kremilin the evil empire Pakistan has a vested interest in calling Karmal Najib change over as Kafir and Killer of humans rights The Rapporteur reported what was arranged for him, heard versions

prepared and dressed up, saw scenes and people on a conducted tour and thought that the prosecution testimony was protected truth. Inevitably a pro-Pak verdict, with the imprimature of a U.N. Commission violated the foremost human right—the right to justice based on evidence on both sides. The Rapporteur, with becoming frankness, has disclosed his source as what Pakistan revealed, backed by processed hearsay and scenes of woe-a quick meal for an inquirer in a hungry hurry in the hands of a party who is charged by Afghanistan as the master culprit.

> "There is no philosopher in the world so great but that he believes a million things on the faith of other people and accepts a great many more truths than he demonstrates."—
>
> TOCQUEVILLE :

If the whole map of enquiry was not available, a Report should have been declined. But to tell the world as truth what is only the defense case of the accused is disingenuous.

> "There are no whole truths : all truths are half-truths. It is trying to treat them as whole truths that plays the devil."
>
> WHITEHEAD

Wishful jurisprudence is the vanishing point of Human Justice. The general conclusions of Mr. Felix Ermacora are set out in paras 128 to 131 of the Report :

"128—Only when the foreign troops have left the country can the fate of the refugees be decided. In this respect it must be noted that the Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly have repeatedly called for the withdrawal of foreign troops. In that connection the representatives of those who are now refugees ought to be consulted by all the parties responsible for a political solution of the conflict.

129—Until the foreign troops leave the country, the world community, through the United Nations system, should be permitted to contribute to the restoration of economic, social and cultural rights, the specialized agencies should be permitted to provide humanitarian assistance throughout the country so as to prevent large parts of Afghanistan from becoming a humanitarian no man's land.

130—The Government of Afghanistan should be urged to comply strictly with the obligations which are imposed on it by international human rights instruments, in particular the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, signed by the Government of Afghanistan on 4 February 1985, and the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners In regard to death sentences and political imprisonment, amnesty, clemency and pardon should be taken into account

131—Furthermore, the fate of missing persons who disappeared before December 1979 should be investigated. As stated earlier in this report, the number of missing persons is far higher than reported The exact number of missing persons and if possible their whereabouts should be established ' [9]

If the Rapporteur could consult publications and reports from the western and Pakistani sides, with the U S going hysterical, as usual about human rights graveyards wherever the popular regimes were not their clients, the distinguished investigator could and should have sought and got other materials available from persons of standing who had visited Afghanistan and written about the misinformation spread and the actual things they saw, about the incitement of the refugees using religion as munition, the humanitarian concern Kabul had shown towards the people and the compassionate policy of National Reconciliation and Political Coalition Where there is a will there is a way But where a chorus of jury shouting Afghan guilt and Soviet invasion is to be propped up by a Report non cooperation is not unnatural Anyway the Afghan plea, very fairly quoted by the Rapporteur, challenges his very mandate and very rightly stresses why it raises a basic jurisdictional objection but presents the respect for human rights the Karmal and Najib phase has practised The Rapporteur's summary of the Afghan stand needs excerption

"The Observer for Afghanistan said that his delegation was strongly opposed to the draft resolution which was designed to *inflame world public opinion and which called into question* Afghanistan's loyalty to human rights and the fundamental freedoms It was a regrettable fact that those behind the draft resolution had distorted events in Afghanistan with a view to camouflaging their plans for aggression stepping up their military strength in the area, justifying the arms race and attempting to increase tension in the region and throughout the world They

wanted to make use of the Sub-Commission to interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs, subject its heroic people in further tribulations and deflect them from the path they had freely chosen in accordance with their right to self-determination.

"A detailed account of the real situation pertaining to human rights in Afghanistan had already been given before the Human Rights Committee but he would reiterate once again that, since the events of 27 December 1979 when the new revolutionary government had assumed power, genuine liberty of the person, political liberty and equality of all citizens before the law, irrespective of origin, had been guaranteed. A series of measures of a humanitarian nature had been taken with a view to ensuring the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Afghan people. Those measures included the abolition of all anti-democratic and inhumane laws and of arbitrary arrests, persecutions and searches, as well as the guarantee of the right to life of security for all, of respect for the principles of Islam and religious rights, of protection of the family, and of the principle of peace and revolutionary order in the country.

"In addition, the necessary conditions for the exercise of the fundamental rights and democratic freedoms had been introduced, including the right t express one's opinion freely and openly, the right of association, the right to hold peaceful demonstrations, the right to belong to social democratic organizations, the right to work, the right to health, and social welfare benefits for the elderly and disabled. Furthermore, scientific, technical, cultural and artistic freedom, in line with the objectives of the revolution, freedom of domicile, of correspondence, of telephone, telegraphic and other communications, and the right to submit complaints, individually and collectively, to the appropriate Government body, were all guaranteed and set forth under chapter 2 of the fundamental principles of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

"Those humanitarian measures together with the economic and social changes currently taking place were in keeping with the aspirations of the Afghan people for a better life and explained why the Afghan Government was receiving every growing support from all strata of the population. The Government's social and political measures continued to expand and the organs of the people's power continued to grow stronger. The new Afghanistan continued to move forward, confident in a just and effective system which would ensure a prosperous and happy life for its people.

"In the light of those considerations, his delegation condemned the draft resolution as anti Afghan and devoid of any political realism If it were adopted, his Government would treat it as null and void and would not regard itself as bound by its terms" [10] (E/CN 4/Sub 2/183/SR 30, paras 93 97)

"28 Following the adoption of Commission resolution 1984/55 calling for the appointment of a special rapporteur on the situation in Afghanistan, the Observer for Afghanistan stated that

"His Government had demonstrated its full co operation with the Commission and provided the necessary explanations and details concerning the promotion and protection of human rights in Afghanistan and the specific and effective humanitrian and economic and social measures it had consistently taken following the victory of the revolution Fully respecting the rights, democratic freedoms, dignity and honour of Afghan citizens, it was guiding Afghan society towards peace, freedom, democracy, equality, progress and justice In the light of those explanations and of the long standing fact that no argment or evidence could be adduced against Afghanistan, the only reasonable decision the Commission could take would be to cease immediately an unjustified consideration of the so-called 'situation of human rights in Afghanistan', where all rights and democratic freedoms were fully guaranteed, and to put an end to all injurious and tendentious manoeuvres to misuse the situation in Afghanistan for political ends Any other decision would run counter to established procedure and the generally recognized norms of international law

"His delegation was entitled to hope that the Commission would end all attempts to question his country's faithful protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and support his Government's humanitarian measures to build a flourishing and just society, free from exploitation His delegation was firmly opposed to Commission resolution 1984/55, the relevent decision of the Commission and any misuse of the situation for political ends Such a resolution and decision failed to take account of the true situation in Afghanistan and were prejudicial to established procedures, they were in no way binding on his Government, which considered them unlawful, null and void, politically injurious and morally hypocritical" [11]
(E/CN 4/1984/SR 63, paras 2 3) "

Again, Afghanistan informed the Rapporteur the facts which repelled the charges

"As you are well aware, in the wake of the new revolutionary phase of the April revolution, a series of infinitely humanistic measures have been adopted by the State. The proclamation of general amnesty, forgiveness and mercy shown by the popular Government of Afghanistan to those who are engaged in the activities against the gains of our revolution, as well as even the pardon of those terrorists and mercenaries who have intermittently resorted to armed feud and atrocities with a view to disturbing the peace and tranquility of the people and nation, will unequivocally bear witness to this claim. The decree of general amnesty issued by the State provides the possibility for the misled and deceived compatriots, who have embarked upon the anti-people and subversive brutalities, to trust and rely on the humanitarian deameanour of the Afghan Democratic State and refrain from their acts of arson and sabotage and to take advantage of the benefits of this particular decree. The humanistic behaviour of the State has had an appreciative and approbationary impact upon the dozens of foreign journalists and representatives of international organizations when they observed living conditions of detainees in Afghanistan. However, it is worth mentioning that a limited number of subservients and alien hirelings who engaged in (encouraging) chaos and turmoil to endanger the innocent life of the people and the environment have been apprehended in batches and tried shortly afterwards in accordance with the legal and lawful norms and criteria of the Afghan State, while the respective court also found them guilty on the basis of irrefutable evidence. Some of such culprits who expressed their compunction and pleaded guilty have been forgiven. A number of them, of course with lesser crimes, have been sentenced to short-term incarcerations, but a very few of the convicts who had perpetrated unpardonably bloody activities against the innocent people .... (words appear to be missing in the text of the telegram) .... the evaluation of their relative dossiers and the trial in accordance with the law of the land. It is to be stated that the death sentence still consititutes a statutory part of the Afghan judicial system. The execution of such criminals is undoubtedly not only indicative of the State's struggle against terrorism and plunder, but also is demonstrative of the strong position of the Government in defence and protection of the human rights of its citizens, particularly the right to live in peace and have their lives and property protected by law."

"Very strict legal measures are provided by law for abduction.

The Government has resolutely condemned such practices, without any distinction.

"We are very pleased to state that arbitrary or summary executions do not exist in the Republic. The Government and the judicial authorities of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, on the basis of directives of Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of the PDPA CC and President of the RC, practise the utmost restraint to avoid sentencing anyone to death. On many occasions, the Presidium of the RC has pardoned criminals who were sentenced to death by courts. Only in some cases those criminals who have repeatedly and intentionally committed unforgiveable crimes which have resulted in the loss of life and great economic and social damage to our country and people might be executed. However in spite of the serious crimes committed by such criminals a limited number of executions have taken place.

"It should be added that the State organs are trying to reduce the number of executions and aboilsh capital punishment in Afghanistan. It is the imperialist and reactionary regimes of the region, which through seduction are provoking some of our people to commit crimes against their people, revolt and shed the blood of their brothers. We are sure that the fate of those who murder others in cold blood cannot be determined differently in any other society."[12]

Anyway the Report is adverse. Whatever the flaws in the Report and Recommendations, we must respectfully scrutinize the findings and ascertain how far search for truth has been objective.

> "What is truth ? said Jesting Pilate; and would not
> say for an answer" BACON

[1]R.B.Gour Afghanistan Expanding Social Base of Revolution 1987 p.18 see also Sumit Chakravarti, Dateline Kabul 1983 pp 26Z7

[2]Abdul Samad Qayumi Minister of Education while delivering a convocation address of the 2nd Teachers Congress in Oct 1986 see Afghanistan Today 1987 No. 3 p.25

[3]Afghanistan Today 1987 No 4 p. 9

[4]Supra note 1 pp 22-23

[5]*Ibid* p-34

[6]B.R.Goyal Afghanistan: Behind the Smoke screen 1984 pp 162-163

[7]Vinod Sethi 'Women and Children in Afghanistan' P.U.C.L. Bulletin July 1987 p 7

[8]Commission on Human Rights-Forty Second SessionAgenda Item 12-Report by Felix Ermacora p 10-para 43.

[9]Ibid

[10]E/CN.4/Sub. 2/1983 R.30, paras 9397

[11]E/CN.4/1984 SR 63 paras 2-3

[12]*Ibid*

CHAPTER V

AFGHAN HUMAN RIGHTS - HOW FREE ARE PEOPLE:

"If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story."

- SHAKESPEARE

Ariana, over the ages, has been witness to great cultures and Nature's resources but the people, living in primitive poverty, tribal simplicity and mountainous magnificence, are among the poorest on earth. The Kamshka empire to the Democratic Republic is a long stretch of history of this sturdy race, loving independence but denied that title by invasions and other factors, godly in their dispositvon but controlled by religious fundamentalists, democratic in their traditions but rarely or really free because of their illiteracy and purdah-bound womanhood.

A geo-political flash black sets the authentic backdrop to the study of the human rights status of Afghan humanity 15 million strong.

> "Afghanistan is a land with an ancient history and a unique geographic position at one of the "crossroads" of Asia. The phalanges of Alexander the Great, the hordes of Genghis Khan, the soldiers of Nadir Shah - they all made devastating raids through the valleys and canyons of Afghanistan. And even in the relatively recent past, right up until the present century, Britain's colonial forces tried for a hundred years to conquer independent Afghanistan bordering on Russia, China, Iran, and India. The country's history is full of countless internecine wars and conflicts between feudal khans and the central government. In fact, there has never been a government in Afghanistan that fully controlled the country's entire territory.

> Relations between the central authorities and various tribes have been particularly tense, pretenders to the throne engaged in all sorts of intrigues around these tribes, while agents of colonial powers conducted subversive activities
> "Shortly before the April 1978 national democratic revolution, which brought down Mohammad Daud's regime of capitalists and landlords, the level of our country's social and economic development was extremely low Along with the patriarchal, tribal and clan relations of the nomads, there was virtual serfdom in the countryside The country held one of the last places in the world in terms of per capita income - 1 62 dollars a year Industrial output accounted for 3 3 per cent of the gross national product In agriculture, about a third of all peasant families had no land of their own Medical care was available only in the capital and in a number of provincial centres and, moreover, was available only to the propertied classes The average life-span was 42 years More than 90 per cent of the population could neither read nor write Former US President Richard Nixon one jokingly suggested that Afghanistan be preserved as a "museum of the Middle Ages "[1]

The Special Rapporteur[2] has made a survey of the Afghan Chronicle to introduce the human rights issues It is a good starting point for our discussion

> "42 It has been held that the political situation in Afghanistan is a cause of concern for human rights in the country, it has been also maintained that this same situation was precisely intended to safeguard and improve the human rights situation there It is therefore necessary to recall the principal political developments in Afghanistan for a better understanding of the present situation
> "43 According to a census carried out in 1979, the population of Afghanistan is 15 5 million of whom about 913,000 lived in Kabul However, the influx

of people from rural areas has led to a considerable increase in the population of Kabul since. 1979. The majority of the total work-force is engaged in agriculture (61.3 per cent), the services sector (19.4 per cent), food industries (11 per cent) and trade (3.6 per cent). The population is made up of a number of ethnic groups, the largest being the Pashto, the Hazaras and the Tadzhik. The principal religion in Afghanistan is Islam, which is followed by some 99 per cent of the population.

"44 The heteroethnic character of the country and its geographical configuration have marked the history of Afghanistan with conflicts among the various tribes from time to time and between the tribes themselves and the central Government. Since the nineteenth century, in particular, Afghanistan acquired a certain strategic importance which attracted interest on the part of external powers.

"45 Without embarking on the hoary debate as to how the Afghan State came into existence (whether with the designation of Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1747 or that of Abdul Rahman in 1880), what we need to determine at this stage is the level of importance of Muslim law and tribal customs as the basis of the Afghan institutions in a multiracial State dominated by the Pashto. The system of political organization of the Pashto tribes is based on assemblies of elders known as *jirgah*, which range from the family gathering to the *Loya Jirgah*, as assembly of all the Pashto tribes, which played a decisive role in appointing the monarch and in ratifying major State decisions or various constitutional amendments. Traditionally, internal conflicts have been dealt with since 1921 before the *Loya Jirgah*, which was convened in 1924, 1928, 1930, 1941 and 1964.

"46 Throughout Afghan history and up to the time of the adoption of the Constitution of 1964, Afghanistan's institutions, whether based on

written instruments or not, derived from a type of government based mainly on the consensus of the community directed by a monarch whose main mission was to ensure the observance of the *shari'a* (Muslim canon law, the basis of Muslim law) From 1964 onwards, the insitutions were adapted to the requirements of modernization of the country, and in actual fact while leaving a preponderant place to Islam, a distinction was established between the executive power and the functions of the traditional monarch, thus reconciling tradition and modernism As is indicated in the preamble to the Constitution on 1 October 1964, a number of basic principles were laid down (justice, equality, respect for human dignity, political, economic and social democracy) with a view to the organization of national life in Afghanistan in accordance with the requirements of the day and on the basis of the nation's historic and cultural background

"47 In a analysis of the formation of the Afghan State, Mr Gilles Rossignol describes the two major periods in the history of Afghan institutions up to 1919, they were directly inspired by the Pashto customary law and muslim tradition, but not crystallized in any instrument From 1919 on, various experiments were tried out to reconcile tradition and aspirations to modernism in legal instruments The author concludes that it would not seem unfair to suggest that institutional trends up to 1978 had helped to widen the gap between present-day reality and the traditional Afghan society, which was stubbornly opposed to any state intervention, and legal thinking confined to the few circles in the capital In April 1978, the Afghan communists took over power It was to be revolt . and the upheaval was so great, and the imposed ideology so alien to the society and its attachment to Islam, that the central power found themselves isolated, cut off from their traditional roots .. It was then that the opposition movements made their presence felt and organized themselves

"48 Afghanistan witnessed the development of political and administrative institutions under the various monarchs who followed one after another up to 1973. Although it seems difficult to describe the Afghan national entity in terms of existing particularism, it can be roughly divided into five main periods:

"(a) Up to 1880, the period was marked by a dynastic succession in which the institutions were in the hands of the royal power which governed in accordance with the principles of shari'a but in which authority depended on the autonomy of the various ethnic groups in relation to the Pashto tribes.

"(b) From 1880 to 1919, with conquest of power by King Abdul Rahman Khan, under whose reign certain reforms took place together with genuine political and administrative organization (both civil - *Mulki* - military - *Nezami*). As a result of his great firmness and the support he succeeded in obtaining from the all-powerful religious authorities (the Mullahs), King Abdul Rahman began to transform the Afghan State and to achieve internal sovereignty. However in foreign policy the King entirely abandoned his sovereignty to Great Britain, which took it over in implementation of the Treaty of Gandamak signed in 1878 with King Yaqub. On the death of Abdul Rahman in 1901, his son Habibullah who succeeded him continued until his death in 1919 to carry on the policy of reform with great caution, endeavouring, in order to maintain his authority, to leave sufficient autonomy to the clans for the settlement of their differences.

"(c) The third period (1919-1973) opened up the way to the establishment of a constitutional monarchy with the installation, for the first time in the history of Afghan institutions, of basic reforms by King Amanullah and the signing of the Treaty of Rawalpindi in August 1919, by which Afghanistan

recovered its external autonomy. In 1921, Amanullah promulgated an instrument regulating the Afghan institutions by separating the power of the monarch and those of the executive. A State Council, an audit office and local assemblies were set up. On the basis of the 1921 reforms, King Amanullah in April 1923 issued a constitutional text which was submitted to the *Loya Jirgah* but was not applied, since all these meausres including an attempt to bring about the emancipation of women precipitated his downfall in 1929. In 1931 his successor promulgated the first Afghan Constitution which provided for the installation of a National Council - a sort of Chamber of Deputies - and an Upper Chamber. Islam was proclaimed as the state religion and the *shari'a* constitutes the basis of the country's legislation. The King as religious authority for practical purposes held all the executive authority, the legislative playing a more or less advisory role. A new Constitution was promulgated in 1964 under which the King appointed the Government and shared the executive functions with it. The initiative in legislative matters belonged to the Government, Parliament and the Supreme Court, the highest judical body. The institutionalized *Loya Jirgah* was consulted on matters of a general nature in the even of Constitutional amendments and succession. It should be noted that the Constitution of 1964, by authorizing the formation of political movements made it possible to set up the Afghan People's Democratic Party (PDPA), which brought together the Khalq and the Parsham. The failure once again of this attempt to build up parliamentary institutions can be attributed to the impossibiity of applying systems of values not in keeping with a traditional view that is resistant to any change. The 1931 Constitution, rounded off by the more important one of 1964, had the virtue of setting up institutions which took account of the need for

reform and the traditional religious values, fundamentally transforming Afghan society and thus opening up a breach which led to the proclamation of a Republic in 1973 by Prince Daoud, following a *coup d'etat*.

"(d) A fourth period runs from after the proclamation of the Republic in 1973 until 1978, when Prince Daoud, while attempting to carry out agrarian reform, steered the political, economic and social system towards socialism. Three decrees were to organize the political life of Afghanistan until 1977, when a new constitution was promulgated. This period, marked by an upsurge of discontent and by squabbles between the two political parties contending for power (Khalq and Parsham), ended first in the unification of Khalq and Parsham in July 1977, and then in the *coup d'etat* of 27 April 1978 (the so-called "Saur Revolution") with the fall of Daoud and the takeover by Nur Mohammad Tarakki.

"(e) During the fifth period, from 27 April 1978 to 29 December 1979, affairs were conducted first by Tarakki and then by Hafizullah Amin. This period was also marked by the take over of power by the two communit elements of the Afghan People's Democratic Party, Khalq and Parsham. In May 1978, a secret police was set up (AGSA), which was recast and replaced early in 1980 by the Khad (Khedamat-el-Atlat-Dawlati). A Government set up under the Presidency of Tarakki decided to institute a series of reforms by promulgating eight decrees, the text of which is annexed to this report. Among the decrees to which the Special Rapporteur would like to draw particular attention is Decree No .6 of 12 July 1978, abolishing mortgage indebtedness of the peasants towards the landowners. Decree No. 8 of December 1978 limits family ownership to six hectares of good land. According to information communicated to the Special Repporteur these reforms, affecting the

ancestral relationship between landowners and peasants, were very badly received by the population on the grounds that "in attempting to break the links between landowners and poor peasants, the reforms deprived the latter of their traditional sources of supply of grain, materials and water which the regime is not in a position to replace" Indeed, the peasants were more interested in a fair sharing out of water than in the distribution of land which was likely to remain without irrigation Decree No 7, which limited the amount of the dowry payable to the family of a fiance as a safeguard against possible repudiation also seems to have meet with some opposition on the part of the majority traditionalists Since women are now not paid a dowry, they are without compensation or means of survival

"49 This fifth period which thus originated with the Saur Revolution is decisive for an understanding of the situation s a whole President Tarakki, in his desire to continue the socialist work of Price Daoud, called in the assistance of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to help him to carry through his revolution To this end he concluded a treaty with the USSR on 5 December 1978, thus remaining in the tradition of his predecessors, who had concluded four treaties with the USSR

"50 In the view of the Special Rapporteur, the present human rights situation in Afghanistan and the resolutions of United Nationas bodies on the situation cannot be fully understood without reference to the relationship between Afghanistan and the USSR This relationship is based today on the Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Co-operation signed on 5 December 1978 This treaty is composed of 13 articles, and article 4 reads as follows

"The high contracting parties, acting in the spirit of traditions of friendship and good neighbourliness, as well as of the Charter of the United Nations, will consult each other and by agreement take

> appropriate measures to ensure the security, independence and territorial integrity of the two countries. In the interests of strengthening their defence capacity the high contracting parties will continue to develop co-operation in the military field on the basis of appropriate agreements concluded between them".

This treaty, as indicated above, followed a number of other treaties between the two countries.

> "51 All the reforms introduced during the various periods described above have met with considerable opposition from a number of tribes and ethnic or religious groups as running counter to traditional religious values. Already in August 1978, in several areas where opposition to these measures was the strongest, military operations were undertaken affecting the provinces of Nuristan, Kunar, Paktia, Parwan and Oruzgan. The first exodus, of about 50,000 persons, took place. At about that time, in March 1979, several thousand farmers protested in Herat against reform measures taken by the Government which again led to the use of force and to the creation of the security police. The resistance to the reforms attempted by the Central Government, which in the past had been resolved through the convocation of the *Loya Jirgah* and consultation of the various representatives in the country, for the first time led to an attempt by the Central Government to impose its reforms by force."

Then came Babrak Karmal and the Soviet military assistance of 29 December 1979 and the general amnesty by the new government which freed thousands from prison. Currently, the Fundamental Principles of the Democratic Repubic of Afghanistan, is progressive in content, liberal vis a vis human rights and sensitively protective of Islam. Adopted on 21 April 1980 this constitutional structure has recently been replaced by a new Constitution giving realistic effect to the political pluralism, cultural and ethnic identities, Islamic preponderance and minority rights.

A flood of refugees[3], quantified at between 4 and 5 million, gave rise to international ballyhoo In this context, the observations of the Rapporteur, not a pro-Kabul monitor, are relevant

> "60 The majority of the refugees were said to be ethnic Pathans, a sizeable number are Baluchis Other ethnic groups among the refugees include Nuristanis, Tadjiko, Hazara, Uzbeks, Turkmen and Mongols, all in somewhat reduced percentages In virtually all cases the refugees in Pakistan come from the rural areas Nearly three quarters of the refugee populations is made up of women and children The refugee come from all 29 provinces of Afghanistan "

Grievious violations of the human rights of the tribesmqn were considered by the Rapporteur The whole case is built on the bedrock of decrees passed by Tarakki, summed up by him thus

> "67 At the very outset of the revolution between April and November 1978, eight decrees were promulgated to reorganize the Government and the infrastructure of the country These decrees are briefly described below
> (a) Decree No 1, promulgated on 30 April 1978, concerning the organization of the Government and the establishment of the Revolutionary Council as the supreme power and of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan The Decree sets out that Government shall be conducted by decrees emanating from the Revolutionary Council
> (b) Decree No 2 of 1 May 1978 nominates the members of the Government,
> (c) Decree No 3 of 14 May 1978 establishes the High Judiciary Council and regulates the relations between the State and the individual Under this Decree the Judiciary Council is made responsible to the Revolutionary Council In addition a Revolutionary Military Court is established which is also made responsible to the Revolutionary Council

(d) Decree No. 4 of 15 May 1978 concerns what is described as the development and evolution of the culture and language of the tribes and nationalities which make up Afghanistan;
(e) Decree No. 5 of 12 June 1978 recognizes the rights of citizens and, *inter alia*, withdraws the citizenship of some 23 persons belonging to the royal family;
(f) Decree No. 6 of 12 July 1978 introduces land reform;
(g) Decree No. 7 of 17 October 1978 sets out regtions onn equal rights for women and men in the field of civil law, purporting to remove what is termed as the "unjust patriarchal feudalistic relations between husband and wife" with the avowed purpose of consolidating future family ties;
(h) Decree No. 8 of 28 November 1978 sets out further rules and regulations about land and defines the expression "family", peasant and other categories, of agricultural workers."

The Rapporteur has drawn inferences adverse to the Afghan Government because he argues that the orthodox and the landed interests and the traditional clerics were opposed to reform decrees and the foreign troops were anthema for Afghan dignity and liberty. He has collected evidence thro's refugee camps and transit tents located in Pakistan—held or controlled areas. The Saur Revolution, like any other radical change of government, involved serious challenges to the status quo ante. Revolutions, especially in a stagnant society, are the powerful moving vehicles of social and political progress, whether in the U.S. or in the U.S.S.R., India, Nicaragua or Afghanistan. Indeed, 'revolutions are the locomotives of history'.

Frankly, no Revolution is ordinarily midwifed without a Caesarean. The historic American Revolution was not sliced like butter nor the Russian nor the French. No Caesar handed over Power on a peaceful platter nor did a Revolution begin its course after a General Election. The very process inevitably involves a sharp instrumentality preferably thro' a radical party committed to rapid social transformation and ready to be its vanguard and vigilant watchdog. Counter-revolutionaries, aided and abetted by external

forces are implicit in the calculus of a radical social order breaking with the injustices of the past The Afghan change over is no exception to the dynamics of history Once this principle is grasped, marginal deviances and consequential tumults are understandable And when a grand alliance, with the U S taking on the leading role, instigates rebels and arms them with doctrines and deadly weapons, upsurges and violations of human rights may well be invented and neatly fobbed off on the weaker side, viz KABUL

What has actually been done? Our visits to Kabul, spread over a week or so each time, helped us look at the scenario of social locomotion and the celerity of the change Kabul is the heart and head of Afghan country and now, a vast human influx makes it representative of the larger community We had private conversations, confidential exchanges and public discussions We met Indians, Sikhs and Hindus, asked for their views on Party misuse of power, Indian minorities and Islamic tolerance, Karmal's personality cult, if any, and cadres of the PDPA behaving as if above the law We were glad to hear that religious minorities had perfect freedom of religion and culture

The Indian Ambassador paid tribute to the Najib regime No oppression, no suppression, no lawless violence, peaceful flow of business and awakened Afghan industry Indo Afghan relations were very warm, understanding and friendly Russian troops he said were conspicuous by their absence in civilian affairs Afghanistan was in full control of the Administration and Soviet interference was just not there Of course, several provinces were quite and under government control, but some provinces were vulnerable to Pak incursions and Mujahideen menace Not a single case of molestation of women was mentioned nor party usurpation taking the law into their own hands Indian and Afghan trade and business people were happy about Kabul being co operative Frankly, the Russian presence was welcomed by a few leading businessmen who wondered whether the withdrawal of troops might generate a struggle for power and consequent choas None of them told us of PDPA atrocities None of them considered 'communist' control 'thro' a single party or personality as on the agenda of the future We met a few leaders of other political parties who talked of a national coahtion and opportunity for opposition parties No one alleged violent elimination of political pluralism or enforced silence or insistence on PDPA conformism We met non Party lawyers and

judges and enjoyed the privilege of long and even blunt exchange of views in an atmoshpere of controversiality. We found no signs of political brain-washing and no one was in a mood to tolerate authoritarianism, even from the President of the Republic or General Secretary of the PDPA. The lawyers maintained the supremacy of the rule of law: Be you ever so high, the law is above you.

The judges were highly respected and aired their views independently. No political pressure nor Party manipulation in pending cases or appointment of judges. The courts were not pressre cookers. But what was the law? The supreme place belonged to the Fundamental Law. Islamic Law, wherever it applied, was interpreted in a progressive spirit with due regard to values of equality and social justice and dignity of womanhood. They talked the language of civilised jurisprudence, human rights, aversion for torture and death sentence and judical independence. We were on the same wave-length. There was no apprehension of political bossism. They did tell us how the process of disinformation and misinformation was used by the imperialists and their lackeys to make a monstrous caricature of the Afghan rulers and invent crimes which never occured. They bitterly complained of rebels committing foul crimes. Sounded credible but not enough for a verdict when the other side is not before you.

Remarkable was our experiences about visits to factories. Women workers alongside of men, assertive working class whose wages were fair by Afghan standards. Housing, creaches, canteens, games and leisure were enjoyed by them. A quantum jump from hierarchican medievalism to egalitarian modernism.

All this is not at the expense of Islam. In fact, the revolutionary potential of Islam had been muffled until now. Brotherhood of man, equal dignity of womanhood, human justice under divine dispensation, subordination to the divine guidance of the Great Prophet and the Mercy of Allah - such is the cultural essence of Islamic teaching. All this comports with the democratic soul of the Saur Revolution. Gaur[4], in his recent book, has something factual to say about the political idiom, industrialisation, workers' wages and Islam :

> "The National Fatherland Front plays a crucial role in strengthening the revolutionary rule and in

forging the unity of the party with other non party leaders and people

"In this front, along with PDPA there are many non party elements and influential people There are 16 different mass organisations that are there as its constituents Its foundation conference was held on June 15, 1981 By the end of 1985 it had a membership of seven lakh It has 2,643 councils all over the country, of these 1,605 councils are in residential areas while 785 are working in villages and tribal territories And the remaining are situated in districts, cities and towns

"The National Fatherland Front has a central council of 129 members and an executive of 29 The front has a President, four Vice Presidents and one Secretary One of the Vice Presidents is Mehr Chand Verma of Indian origin who was also the President of the Chamber of Commerce

"This National Fatherland Front has united all those patriotic forces that stand for democracy, that support the National Democratic Revolution and that are opposed to imperialism and feudalism And this unity and this front impart considerable strength to the new Afghan administration The trade union organisation of Afghanistan is gaining strength every day In 1985 its membership was 2,20,200 The Constitution of this trade union organisation is such that it is a single organisation for all the workers of the country with branches spread all over It has 2,000 primary units and 31 Provincial Councils It has eight in industrial commissions that keep track of developments in the concerned industries and collect information about them

"Wages were raised by 26 6 per cent in 1981 and again by 19 6 per cent in 1983 The minimum wage was 2,020 Afghanis which an unskilled worker gets Skilled workers earn a wage up to 12,000 Afghanis which in certain cases is more than the salary of a deputy minister

"Trade Unions run dispensaries, nurseries and kindergartens for the benefit of workers. There are armed squads of workers for the defence of the factory.

"Residential flats are being constructed for the workers. These are flats comprising 3 to 5 rooms and are allotted to the workers depending on the strength to their families.

"Rest houses are being constructed for the workers. The Royal Palace at Jalalabad has been converted into a Rest House for worker. Some 1,500 workers go to Soviet Union every year for rest and recreation."

"Trade Unions have 46 mobile cinemas and 15 video projectors. In October 1985 two Rest Houses were inaugurated in Kabul and Faizabad (Badakshan).

"There is TV set in every factory. And programme for wokers are broadcast on the radio and telecast on the TV.

"There is arrangment for running literacy clases for the illiterate in the factories."

"All laws concerning the workers are enacted in consultation with the Trade Union Organisation.

"Women workers enjoy three month's maternity leave with full pay. Creches are provided in factories for breast-fed babies.

"The Women's Democratic Organisation is also growing in strength.

"The Afghan women had to work every hard. Apart from the household drudgery, they had to collect firewood and bring water. As many as 98 per cent women were illterate.

"It was a formidable task to work among women due to their extreme backwardness. Despite difficulties, the activists of Women's Organisation, with great patience, explained to the women their place in the society and prepared them to receive the benefits of revolution. They were told who were their friends and who their enemies. The illiterate

women were persuaded to learn to read and write
"Such are the gigantic tasks undertaken by the Women's Democratic Organisation
"Afghan women enjoy rights with men "
"The total strength of working women is 2,59,080 and among them 24,500 are industrial workers Young women are also joining the armed defence squads
"Certain customs have taken roots among the tribes For instance, according to tribal customs the punishment for theft and prostitution is imprisonment In the case of prostitution punishment is awarded to both man and women
"If a woman obtains divorce, she gets only the Mehr amount And if a man divorces the woman, he has to give her the share in the property also
"If the children are with the mother, the former husband has to meet their expenses And if the mother is unable to being them up properly, the father has a right to take them away
"Triple divorce' is practised among Afghan tribes also But this has to be pronounced before the judge in the family court The judge is to be convinced of the reasons for divorce and both husband and wife have to agree to divorce each other In case the wife does not agree, the judge will give the final verdict
"This was made into a statute in Zahir Shah's times and no mullah opposed it
"There is another significant feature as well
"Polygamy is confined to only one per cent men in Afghanistan [5]
"Revolution has slowly but steadily brought about a change in the thinking of Afghan women They are now conscious of their rights and even go to courts to secure justice
"There is an organisation of mullahs and religious workers They are free top reach the principles of Islam The revolutionary government has provided 20 600,000 Afghanis to this organisation during the year 1984 85 In some places the mullahs are

provided with arms also to defend themselves against rebels.

"During 1984-85 the Ministry of Islamic Affairs has provided 3,95,00,000 Afghanis for constructing and repairing mosques.[6]

"In the last three years 75 new mosques have been built and a number of those destroyed by rebels, have been repaired and renovated.

"Jamili, who is the Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, told us that Islam was the holy religion of Afghanistan. In the very first article of the new Afghan Constitution, it is provided: "The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan is a soverign and democratic state of all working Muslim people of Afghanistan - workers, peasants, artisans, nomads, the intelligentsia and other working people, of all the democratic and patriotic forces, and of the all the nationalities and tribes of the country".

"Immediately after the Revolution, a Council of Islamic Affairs was constituted which was given a ministerial status in 1363 H.S. (1984-85). (Afghanistan follows the Solar Hijri year. The year 1363, for example commenced on March 21, 1984 and ended on March 20, 1985). This ministry takes care of all religions. He told us that "only two days ago a delegation of Hindu and Sikh leaders had met him and the problems facing them were sorted out."

"I would say that only now has Islam been truly revived the Afghanistan. Islam that was practised before the revolution was heavily distorted. Despotic mullahs ruled the roost. A simple Muslim told us that if Prophet Mohammed had come back to Earth and had seen us then, he would have doubtless remarked that "this was not the Islam that he had brought from God for the benefit of humanity"

Youth power and women have been organised systematically. We liscusssed with a top woman activist, minister for a time, who was

fighting for equality of status for women for the days of Karmal We found her in a fighting mood and this convinced us that the writ of Najib did not suppress the outspokenness of other political figures We had occasion to discuss the slimmering state of different political perceptions of some who did not quite appreciate the retirement of Karmal and the ascendency of Dr Najibullah We could gather that there was no iron uniformity enforced on the PDPA and that self criticism and divergence of opinion were not anathema Nevertheless, a broad consensus on the role of PDPA and the National Fatherland Front existed among all the cadres Youth organisations also were coming up in considerable numbers and absorbing members from many tribes After all, Afghanistan is a multi tribal State with Pakhtoons constituting nearly half the population They speak Pushtoo while some other tribes speak Dari There are Baluchis, Tajiks, Uzbeks and other groups, but the cementing factor is Islam

Cultural identity is always a democratic necessity Tuned to this basic imperative the Saur Revolution guaranteed the cultural individuality of the several tribes Brave new Afghanistan thus had a strong base of ethnic diversity unified by traditional democracy This process is called the Jirgah The Grand Assembly or Loya Jirgah is the voice of the nation The Jirgah is the counterpart of the Indian Panchayat In the frozen period of Afghan history even the Jirgah as an institution suffered numbness

> "A 'jirga' was convened 300 years ago when Afghanistan declared its independence from the Safari (Irani) Rule
> "About 110 years ago Shah Sher Ali Khan had convened a 'jirga'
> "'Jirga' was convened three times during the rule of Amanullah Khan and three times during Zahir Shah's rule Amanullah Khan had convened a 'jirga' 63 years ago to adopt the new constitution for Afghanistan Another 'jirga' was convened 44 years ago to approve the neutrality of Afgaanistan in the war And this was the historic decision that prevented Hitler's hordes from occupying Afganistan and threatening Soviet Union from its southern broders and get into India from the West

"The last 'jirga' was convened in Dawood's days about 11 years ago.

"In the 'Loya Jirga' held in April 1985, the participants were 1,796 representatives elected by the people and there were 200 guests. Among the delegates 11.6 per cent were workers, 26 per cent were peasants, 23 per cent belonged to intelligentsia, 3 per cent belonged to the national bourgeois groups, 11 per cent were mullahs and 24.5 per cent were other distinguished people and representatives of other ethnic groups.

"Among them 37 persons were those who were members of earlier parliaments, 43 were ex-ministers, retired generals and high officials. There were 60 women. Only 21 per cent of those present at this 'jirga' belonged to the PDPA.

"The discussions at the jirga and its unanimous conclusions and declaration not only signified the popularity of the new Afghan regime, and put its seal on the consolidation of the revolution, but has also communicated the message of the revolution to distant villages and far off tribes who have now fully realised that imperalists are waging an unjust and undecalred war against the new regime and that it was the duty of every citizen to defend his or her motherland. This assembly further strengthened the foundations of Soviet-Afghan friendship which was the most reliable guarantee of not only the security of Afghanistan but of also peace in this region of Asia.

"After this was convened the frontier tribes 'jirga' in September '1985. To this had come representatives from 10 border provinces, and seven agency (tribal) areas. The 'jirga' commenced its proceedings with 2,500 delegates but later 1,200 more joined them.

"This 'jirga' too approved the conclusions and decisions of the 'Loya jirga'.

"It must be mentioned here that these frontier tribes are mostly nomads and their occupation is

cattle rearing They cross into Pakistan in winter and return of Afghanistan in summer

"The Durand line, that is the so called border between Pakistan and Afghanistan (which was the line drawn by the British), was only a cartographic line and was not identified and marked out on the land People cross it either way without any hindrance

"The tribes that live on the Pakistani side of this 'line' have never been under the direct rule of Government of Pakistan The arrangements of old British days' continue The tribes enjoy full autonomy There is only a political agent of Pakistan stationed there In a sense the tribes enjoy dual citizenship They are Afghan citizens and thus enjoy certain rights They are also Pakistani citizens They freely move about to and fro They have relations on the other side of Durand line and freely carry on trade and business There is nothing that distinguishes them as citizens of two different and soverign countries

"But for some time now, Pakistani's Ziaul Haq government is attempting to strengthen its presence in this area by sendingits regular troops Clashes are taking place and heavy casualties are reported both among the tribes and in the Pakistan army Pakistani forces are pulling down the houses of these tribes

"All this is only increasing the bitterness against the Zia regime among the Pakhtoon tribes and their anger is rising

"To cut the story short, these two 'jirgas' have further fortified the new Afghan regime and its policies This is the reason why the imperialists and their reactionary friends and allies are very much upset And USA has announced that more modern arms will be given to the socalled Afghan rebels But who is to tell them that arms and mercenaries cannot prevent, much less can they reverse, revolutions It is the people who bring about the revolution and it is they who defend it too

"The new Afghan regime has also been further strengthened by the recent elections to the local bodies.

"In Kabul city alone the elected council consits of 461 members elected by 4,80,000 voters out of a total electorate of five lakh in a population of 10,23,000.

"The method of election is that an election commission is set up. To it are submitted that names of the candidates by the National Fatherland Front as well as other not in the Front. Then the elections are held. There were candidates who were not in the Front. Voters have the right to positively vote for a candidate or cast their vote against a candidate. Only those enjoying considerable majority are declared elected. In the city council elections five of the front candidates were defeated and other were elected instead.

"In Kabul province 591 members were elected. Among them only 95 belong the PDPA.

"Similarly in Badakhshan province a council of 615 members was elected.

"Elections have been held in stages in different provinces.

"These elections have virtually handed over the revolution and the revolutionary government to the people. The administration is carried on according to their wishes. And it is they who defend this very administration of their own."[7]

Our long interview with Dr. Najibullah confirmed the fact that vital mistakes had been made during the period of Tarakki and Amin. Not that the programme or policy or the philosophy was fundamentally flawed but that the Tarakki - Amin period witnessed tragic mistakes of implementation. Change of Government in December 1979 and the proclamation of Amnesty which released thousands of detainees inaugurated a more humane era where care was taken to avoid implementation blunders. Dr. Najib calmly, lucidly and candidly explained the errors committed regarding the forced application of the literacy campaign dragging women out of their Purdanashid position and how land reform decrees were

tactlessly driven home rousing rural resistance However, my interview with Karmal and our later interview with Dr Najib made it clear that the earlier error was undone It is significant that credit is given to Dr Najib by the Special Repporteur to this process of democratisation, humanisation and political reconciliation

> 'It should be noted that, in an effort to broaden the bases for the reconstruction of a new social order, the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan announced on 19 November 1985 that it was necessary for all elements of society to participate in the running of all State and administrative bodies In April 1986, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afganistan took on a collegial structure under the leadership of the former Chief of the Khad, Mr Najib Several witnesses explained how the policy of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan had changed after the take over by the new leader of the country Different characteristics of the approach of the new political leader have been given It has been said that Mr Najib has tried to build up a more traditional image of the leadership in an attempt to attract the people of tribal areas, by calling *jigrahs* in which tribal people from Pakistan were persuaded to participate Mention has been made of various visits by the new leader to mosques in Herat On the other hand, efforts have been made to build up local government authorities in places where the Government is in power It has also been said that new leader is trying to increase and strengthen the Afghan army against opposition movement forces
>
> "On 21 December 1985, *Pravda* stated that the mistakes of the first stage of the revolution passion for revolutionary pharses and speeding up of social reforms without taking due account of the real situation and the social and national characteristics of the country had negative consequences and that an atmosphere had to be created for a positive dialogue between social and political forces,

> including those who still held positions hostile to the revolution, in the name of the national rebirth of Afghanistan (see E/CN.4/1986/24, para. 24). In preparing the present report, the Special Repporteur noted that the Government of Mr. Najib was following a policy that acknowledged the validity of this statement."[8]

It is indisputable that the law in force in Afghanistan is in full conformity with the well established rules which govern Human Rights. Afghanistan is a signatory to the relevant Convention and in its Reports to the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Economic and Social Council, Afghanistan has explained how it has given effect to the Rights recognised in the International Instruments. Of course, the Special Rapporteur gets out of this Afghan stand by casuistic arguments which cannot stand scrutiny. He turns the Nelson's eye on the devastating role of the armed rebels and Pak troops. He has also ignored the affirmation of the Karmal regime and the Najib regime by Loya Jirgah and Local Jirgahs. In a tumultuous situation where Pakistan and Iran. China and the United States are harassing the country, the democratic process of the Loya Jirgah establishes the conformance to Art. 1 'that all people have the right to self-determination and that by virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural developments.' Assuming the Five million refugees not to have participated because they were away from Afghan country of their own choice, the substantial population inside the country had virtually affirmed he Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, under the leadership of the PDPA.

The enormous advance in education registered since December 1979 is a tribute to any Government but the Special Repporteur condemns this spectacular advance by a strange argument that the educational system is largely based on non-traditional ideas. Probably he thinks that medieval systems of education must be mummified lest it should be said that traditions have been tampered with. It is curious that he alleges that people are being sent to the Soviet Union for education. How many could the Soviet Union take assuming they are willing? There is a limit to grotesque exaggeration. The funniest instance is the reliance by the Rapporteur of a story presented by a Pakistan engineered witness, a 16 year old boy, who

claim that he had been sent to the Soviet Union against his will, trained for two months in espionge and forced to collect information on the activities of Opposition movements based at Peshawar This adolescent must have been a genius to pick the arts of espionage in two months and the more absurd that a spy is trained against his will to go to Peshawar. If the tale be true he would go to Peshawar and tell them about sensitive matters inside Afghanistan Credulity cannot be strained beyond breaking point

Many other conclusions drawn by the Rapporteur through his ex parte inquiry deserved to be dismissed without a second look All through we gathered about the bombardments, the stringers and other nefarious weapons were being used by the rebels and their patrons Of Course, the Soviet troops were too much for Pakistan dreams of intrusion Consequently the Human Rights Inquiry was thought of as an additional artillery using U N agency

The right to self determination, the right to health, the right to work, the right to education, the right to freedom of opinion, the right to justice, the right to form political associations and the fascinating fasciculus of other human rights have found more fulfillment since 1980, particularly since 1985 The striking advance in the status of women achieved by the Afghan Government deserve praise altho' the Rapporteur in a wholesale condemnation rebukes every measure which was not traditional Perhaps he objects women's edcuation and the abolition of the barborous Purdah system

Luckily, history has advanced rapidly and the new policy creatively innovated and the National Fatherland Front National Reconciliation, National Coalition Government and General Elections has a stunning impact on the world view about Afghanistan Most historic is the Gorbachev announcing of withdrawal of Russian troops from Afghanistan on International guarantees of integrity of Afghan territory The refugees in their masses may well return to their dear homeland and all the "cry wolf" strategems may become a damp squib

The conclusion of the Repporteur is regrettably vitiated with the greatest deference to the learned dignitary We are constrained to conclude with a quotation which pin prints the fundamental error in the report

> There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against arguments

which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting
ignorance; that principle is contempt,
prior to investigation."

- HERBERT SPENCER

[1]Mohammad Ashraf, Afghanistan : A difficult path to peace pp 5-6
[2]Report of the Economic and Social Council situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan Book-A
[4]R B Gaur : Afghanistan Expanding Social Base of Revolution pp 6-10.
[5]We do not have the exact figures but the impression we gained from various people was that Poligamy did exist amongst several tribes but it has been banned for P.D.P.A members
[6]Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Religious Trusts was created in March 1985.
[7]Supra note 4 pp 14-16
[8]Report of the ECOSOC Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan Book A para 16-17 pp 5-6

CHAPTER VI

BACK TO THE FUTURE

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations "

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The Afghan history is old and its culture great but its spirit is stifled by evil forces But comes a time when, breaking the bonds of unfree existence a people, in a collective burst of revolutionary creativity, produce a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal This struggle, if it wins, will prove that the dead never died in vain, that the nation, 'under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish' from Afghan soil This seminal spell of fruitful tension throws up a leader with a vision of the future, a passion for the cause and a dedication which inspires cadres Babrak Karmal, at a critical time, and now Dr Najibullah when Afghans hunger for final liberation, are heroes history has thrown up When the spiritual and moral and material conditions of society are ripe, the chosen Moses arrives and leads the people to the destination

"It is not heroes that make history, but history that makes heroes It is not heroes who create a people but the people who create heroes and move history forward '

—JOSEPH STALIN

For Afghans history is in the making and all the people together fashion its course In a democratic process no one is mere passenger, everyone is crew and someone is captain Dr Najibullah is currently

that pilot with a constructive purpose responding to the Afghan challenge. Nasser, when Egypt struggled, wrote in The Philosophy of the Revolution :

> "Within the Arab circle there is a role wandering aimlessly insearch of a hero. For some reason it seems to me that this role is beckoning to us-to move, to take up its lines, put on its costume and give it life. Indeed, we are the only ones who can play it. The role is to spark the tremendous latent strengths in the region surrounding us to create a great power, which will then rise up to a level of dignity and undertake a positive part in building the future of mankind.
>
> —GAMAL ABDEL NASSER.

A similar summons has made Najib the navigator of the Afghan vessel in a tumultuous sea. A slumbering society silently resisting the fedual overlords, deeply distressed over the mutilation of its integrity and gathering its soul force to sieze back its dmocratic authority, ultimately asserts itself. When society is ripe for change, when it has long been yearning for it, when profound processes of development are at work, when drift or delay could have been fraught with social, economic and political crises, a small match stick will release the T.N.T. But the capacity to plan and execute the project, when politics is pregnant, is the greatness of leadership endowed with dynamic thinking. Perestroika is this tremendous power to restructure. Najib is the Afghan executor of perestroika.

Only a cold dialectical analyst of Afghan realities, so full of internal and external complexities and contradictions, could assess the social-political-religious-economic factors and work out a breakthrough. Grave errors of Tarakki had to be diagnosed, Amin's factionalism dissolved and popular enthusiasm as well as priestly power harnessed for progress.

The pathological issues were clearly identified, meaningful recipes boldly prescribed by the PDPA under his guidence and effective implementation of such policies managed by vigilant monitoring. What has been called the *evolutionary* phase of the April Revolution was planned and executed with growing success. Tarakki, his horrendous blunders notwithstanding, laid the foundation. Karmal, though now on holiday from history, sowed the

seeds of seminal policies and saw, with clarity, the urgent changes if the April Revolution was to be won and the enemies exposed It has fallen to Najib to galvanize the Party, carry the people, strengthen the D R A and re unite the nation poised for the quantum leap to progress, tantalisingly postponed How long, O Lord, how long ? A distressing decade of delay but now come the grey hues of dawn

When Daoud ignited the indignation of the whole nation with his nepotism, favouritism and brutality, the blow was struck in April 1978 by the PDPA The road was hard, the reactionaries strong, the people splintered and the U S , Pakistan, Iran, China and other Islamic fundamentalist countries rose to blow up the Saur Revolution Mohammad Ashraf accurately recounts with fact and fury the post Saur scenario

"People's democracy in Afghanistan is making its way forward under harsh conditions The reactionary forces are putting up bitter resistance to the progressive social, agrarian and economic changes There are approximately 100 various opposition organizations Islamic, nationalist, separatist, Left and Right wing extremist, bourgeois, and monarchist The leadership of most of them includes former fedual lords, landowners, high ranking government officials and army officers, and clergymen

"The leaders of many groupings, including the "Islamic" ones, were fighting against the central government even before the revolution Naturally, people's democracy as a State system was also not to their liking and they began fighting against the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan from the very outset In 1979, when Hafizullah Amin's dictatorial clique was in power, the opposition expanded its ranks As a result of the repressive measures meted out by Amin's extremist entourage, many peasants, nomads and small shopkeepers joined the opposition movements in those days Many Afghans were drawn into the armed struggle by force, and by means of blackmail or deceit The *declasses* accustomed to living by plundering and robbing also went over to the opposition side

"The situation was tragically complicated after the imperialist forces launched their large scale interference The newspaper *The Washington Post* described US subversion against my country as the largest CIA operation since the Vietnam war According to reports in the American press, the United States has spent more than 2,000 million dollars on the undeclared war against the DRA And the

allocations continue to grow. As the American magazine counter Spy has pointed out, the US objective is to install a pro-American regime in Afghanistan, to draw the country into a CENTO-type military bloc, and to use Afghan territory for setting up military bases. Another American magazine, *New World Review*, noted that it is in the interests of the United States to prevent progressive changes in Afghanistan, to wreck its ties with the USSR, and to use the 1,000—mile border the DRA shares with the Soviet Union for the placement of intelligence-gathering equipment.

"The realization of these neoglobalist objectives has come to mean death and suffering for the Afghans. The CIA has set up a network of bandit formations on Pakistani territory whose programme objective is to destroy the DRA as a state and to kill all Afghans supporting the national democratic revolution. For these purposes terrorist groups are being trained by American, Pakistani and West European instructors at more than 120 camps in Pakistan. When sent into Afghanistan, terrorists kill or kidnap government and Party officials and servicemen. Counter-revolutionary bands set up economic blockades of entire regions, prevent state purchases of farm produce, and transport grain and cattle to Pakistan and Iran. The counter-revolutionaries take numerous subversive actions aimed at disrupting the normal operation of factories and cooperatives; they put power transmission lines out of order and mine peasant fields."[1]

The Soviet contingent and the Afghan army had great handicaps to face. The limitless supplies of latest weapons by the U.S., the abundant dollar flood to bribe the rebels into revolt, the few millions of refugees in Iran and Pakistan in restive ire, the military training and sabotage techniques, the phoney propaganda based on 'Islam in danger' and alleged Soviet occupation army, the Niagara of misinformation about human rights violations and baloney broadcast about rebel successes in several provinces and other formidable falsehoods masterfully marshalled by the C.I.A. and other agencies, plus the most astonishingly flourishing business in smuggling of drugs by the pseudo-refugees infiltrating into India and elsewhere, and the heartless blowings up and shootings down these terrible challenges to an infant revolutionary regime were a hard test to the most brilliant genius, the most disciplined and cadre-based Party and the most courageous people and army. The Soviet troops, massed on the frontiers, never interfered with civil life and were

conspicuously absent in cities or towns None the less, that presence had a traumatic impact The psychological war waged by the opponents of the new Saur Order had to be halted Fratricidal, treacherous, power hungry and jehad prone conflicts had to be stopped Peace had to be restored Political parties, having differences with the PDPA and intent on keeping their identity, had to be brought into the political process None of these, *at the cost of fundamentals* nor out of opportunist alliances or violating the democratic goals and social imperatives The basics of the Revolution were non negotiable but all else were flexible To achieve this in an open atmosphere and constructive re thinking needed both *glasnost* and *perestroika*

What had gone wrong with the initial rush of the Saur Project ? The objectives were clear when Daoud was dismissed and the People's Democratic Revolution ushered in Land reforms were necessary but hubristic and hasty expropriation in one swoop by upstart cadres was bound to boomerang once it was realised that the landed gentry had great local influence, that mullahs, with profound Islamic power over the masses, were also landlords and that land reform, so vital for the progress of the peasantry and agricultural prosperity, would suffer a set back by antagonising the feudal-religious kulak oligarchy in the provinces The remdey for the maladies had to be found as strategically important An evolutionary slowing down of the tempo without giving up the target 'Hasten slowly' can be revolutionary wisdom, where the need is not speed but the persuasion of the peasant masses, still under the opium of tardy tradition Winning over the proletariat calls for patient campaigns of education about the social purpose and about the productive result of distributive justice playing on the nation's land resources Likewise, can any reformer ever refute the urgent pre condition of universal literacy if participative democracy is to become functional and human potential unfold its fulness raise the quality of life and push up the pace of national progress ? And yet, how rash and counter productive to drag eldrely laidies from their customary seclusion in one wild sweep, to literacy camps and forced education courses ? The primitive peasant, outraged and enraged would fight such militant folly steeped as he is in a backward cultural milieu Religion is a pain killer for the poor in distrees In a larger perspective Karal Marx called religion as opium or pain killer But if religion has a revolutionary edge even dialectical materialists must use it not oppose religion The passages of Marx read thus

> "Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the feeling of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of unspiritual conditions. It is the opium of the people".[2]

—KARL MARX

And viewed from a different perspective, the great truths of Islam imply the egalitarian imperative of fraternity and the rule of social justice and distributive equity in material wealth. Therefore, a devout Muslim may religiously struggle for human justice, once he grasps the essence of his religion and the bona fides of his Government in abiding by Islam. The socialist essence of Islam is hidden by the reactionary lobbly. The potent strategy of a dynamic leader is to uphold Islam, transform its treasures, beyond the rabid reach of fudamentalist-obscurantists and motivated vested interests. Creative realist that Najib was, he preserved Islam, pressed its great principles to support social justice and national liberation and enlisted the clergy and the ulemas for establishing a just human order. The new Najib policy, why even Karmal strategy, was to defend, not offend, Islam, and to curb PDPA excesses vis a vis religion.

Perestroika, in the Afganistan setting, was to mellow the means to advance the ends, to transform the techniques of change, harnessing the forces of progress, without antagonising the genuine sectors of the clergy, and the peasantry and the pluralist political community fully utilising the deeper traditions of grass-roots democracy and pressing into noble service the finer essence of Islam to fulfill the urgent imperatives of peace, national reconciliation and humanization of Afghan society. This harmonisation of Islamic values with the basic thrust of the Saur Revolution was the sublime strategy, the creative catalysts and visionary statesman of Afghan genius should materialize. To begin with Karmal sowed the futurist seeds and later Najib with self-confident patriotism, dialectical clarity and masterly pragmatism, actualised the evolutionary phase of the radical goal, of course, with the people and the PDPA as the power to usher the new social order. Democracy, equality, social justice, women's liberation and a modern industrial and agricultural economy-these were the goals of the Saur Tryst with Afghan Destiny.

These objectives had not a dog's chance so long as the nation was self-dividend beseiged, was intolerant of political differences, or willfully taking a great leap forward only to fall in the chasm of chaos.

Nor, indeed, while religious bigotry was inflamed against Government could peaceful conditions, so essential for progressive measures, be restored So, Dr Najibulla tackled the problem of land reform on a tempo acceptable to the people The peasantry had to assimilate the agricultural implications of distribution of land and its linkages with their own economic liberation Delinking the land question from the clergy was also tackled with the skill of an artist with the result that the rule of the kulak was rejected by the people The irrigation facilities controlled by the landlords were released for the small farmers and modernisation of agricultural practices was achieved in the provinces Likewise, Islam, a super power of brotherhood, peace and reconciliation, allowed to become an hindrance prejudicing the people against the Democratic Republic By a spiritual switch of policy it became a strong ally of the Saur transformation Mosques were looked after by a Ministry of Islamic affairs, prayers were conducted peacefully and with State protection The clergy were paid their salary by the State and everything that the Islamic Republic could do to preserve, protect and promote Islamic culture was carried out thereby winning the confidence of the entire Afghan humanity The minorities, with their religions, also received re-assurance regarding their customs and manners, their religious practices and festivals Thus God, instead of inhibiting and primitivising man—the Afghan man—became an underwriter of the new democratic order Literacy did not lag behind, but Dr Najib ended the forced literacy classes for women Persuasion prevailed over pressure and the art to educate Afghan woman won the hearts of women in the country side Women's organisations sprung up in numbers, the veil system gradually wore off the lovely eyes and the sun shown on the lovely modern face of the women of Afghanistan Woman power committed itself on the side of the revolution and equality between the genders gradually became a social reality The streets and bazaars, the colleges, offices, and factories proved it

Dr Najib knew that for the new generation to grow, the children had to be taken care of, that health care must receive high priority, that orphans and war widows deserved the first concern We visited a number of institutions for women and children and were amazed at the careful nurture of toddlers, the promise of tomorrow Even the mentally retarded were gently handled and we found institutional attention as high as in the socialist countries and far ahead of many

capitalist countries. On the whole, the social facets of the evolutionary phase of the Saur Revolution made head-way steadily forwards.

The Afghan mountain was moving towards Prophet Mohamed. The radical values, spiritually suppressed by the vested interests, found fresh expression. It may be appropriate to take a critical look at the challenging tasks and the dynamic play of perestroika on the desperate situation which needed immediate solution. The national struggle has had harsh distances to travel with ups and downs and hostile savages to face and fight. But the initial errors once overcome, the slow but steady forward locomotion has been maintained, armed with the justice and wisdom of the path. Now, with hindsight wisdom, one may wonder how once Karmal and now Najib have won the battle, not the war yet. Once the people are with the leadership, the dogs may bark, the caravan will pass.

Now, to the grave problems which shocked the young Republic and to the discovery of the answers to the challenges. Without a sound diagnosis the disease will defy remedies and the prognosis may be depressing. Here is the role of a scientific approach of the political leadership. To surrender to the U.S. engineered opposition was a great betrayal of the Saur Revolution. To slip into the Soviet orbit is to fail the Afghan history of independence, Islam, traditional democracy and cultural integrity. This dilemma was creatively and confidently resolved by the leadership of the PDPA after a scientific assessment of the socio-political forces blowing on both sides. That, in short, is the perennial process of perestroika, a creative continuum, in peace and war, in any developmental stage or resurgent age.

Having a total perspective of the Afghan crisis and sage formulation of policies aided by the collective criticism implied in glasnost and open disent, the issues crystallised in the manner spelt out below.

First and foremost is the unreserved acceptance of Islam by the State, making the holy Quran and its great teachnigs a spiritual catalyst of the material justice of the Saur Order. Along with this synthesis of Islam and the Saur, a grand move to harness the resources of the progressive mullahs and ulemas to the cause of the D.R.A. will go a long way to win the masses over the Revolution.

Next is the great respect for human rights, not merely freedom of religion but also freedom of person and property, of speech and

political dissent, of equality before the law and independence of the judiciary and other civil liberties cherished in democracies

More important is the convincing, concrete expression of political pluralism in the structure of the Administration in all its organs Together with this desideratum goes the sacred concern to preserve those popular instruments of democracy traditionally tuned to the genius of the Afghan tribes Neither the Soviets nor the western constituencies can be transplanted to every country Of course, periodic elections of deputies are guarantees of representative government Said Winiston Churchill once

> "At the bottom of all tributes paid to democracy is the little man, walking into a little booth, with little pencil, making a little cross on a little bit of paper no amount of rhetoric or voluminous discussion can possibly diminish the overwhelming importance of the point "

The PDPA should not monopolise political power and other Parties must be able to share Power in a National Coalition or function freely as the national Opposition, within the revolutionary parameters of Saur and the new constitutional order

'A house divided against itself cannot stand ' To unite the people is a paramount objective National Reconciliation and return of the refugees are categorical commands of contemporary Afghanistan

Above all is the compelling call for peace, but peace which will not prove to be a treacherous truce but an enduring end to hostilities A ceasefire is an imperative need as a condition precedent, a permanent holiday for flow of U S weapons to rebles, an inviolable commitment by neighbours like Pakistan and Iran to abandon aggression and harbouring of refugees with designs to create internal disturbance, organize sporadic attacks and breach the security and integrity of Afghan sovereignty

Fruitful Geneva Agreements currently moving forward under the auspices of the U N where the super powers thrash out all the complex issues and reach solutions on the withdrawal of the 125,000 Soviet soldiers and Pakistan, integrally involved in the process, approves of the modalities, will remove the foreign irritant Both Com Gorbachev and Dr Najibullah are wholly agreed about the troop withdrawal Afghan armed forces are strong enough to defend the Fatherland if foreign enemies do not rush in with imperialist

weapons or fundamentalist fury. The world, for once, is happly stunned by the historic settlement of the Soviet troops withdrawal, U.S. supplies of weapons and Pakistan keeping its hands off from Afghan territory. The will to peace, which that man of destiny Com. Gorbachev has displayed, has worked wonders and the world will be grateful and all Afghans will rejoice that the impasse ends and an era dawns. It is pleasing to read a news item from Tashkent :

"Hopes of a settlement of the Afghan problem soared with the Soviet leader. Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev and the Afghan leader, Dr. Najibullah, arriving here yesterday for talks, and the Pakistani President, Gen. Zia-ulHaq telling Parliament in Islamabad the Geneva accord was ready for signing anytime now.

Gen. Zia said today that Moscow and Washington had cleared the last hurdle on the symmetry issue. Quoting unofficial reports, he said that under the symmentry accord, both the Soviet Union and the U.S. had agreed to continue arms supply to their allies.

'A 20th century miracle-the Afghan settlement-is about to take place,' he said. x x x

"A joint statement issued after a meeting between Mr. Gorbachev and Dr. Najibullah said the last obstacle had been removed thanks to the constructive cooperation of all those involved in the settlement who favoured immediate signing, reports Tass."[3]

Hopefully, peace processes will bless the Afghan masses, refugees included.

The foundations of a Nation's political system, indeed, the manifesto of the people as a whole is contained in a democratic Constitution, which crystallises the constellation of values and norms, instrumentalities and modalities, cultural creeds and carry over of heritage. Necessarily the Saur Revolution must express itself in a comprehensive Constitution incorporating the objectives and achievements of the Afghan people in their struggle. The 'Loya Jirgah' while recently enacting the Constitution, expressed itself thus :

"Therefore, in order to :

-Consolidate the independence, national sovereignty and defend the territorial integrity of the country;

-Achieve reconciliation and strengthen national unity keeping in view the objective realities, the favourite traditions and customs of the people;

-Ensure social justice and equality;

Develop national economy and raise the living standards of the people,

Raise the role and authority of our beloved homeland Afghanistan in the international arena,

We, the representatives of the people of Afghanistan in the Loya Jirgah, conscious of the historic changes that have taken place in our homeland and in the contemporary world, following the tenets of the sacred religion of Islam, preserving and enriching the heritage of the constitutional movement of the country, respecting the United Nations' Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, endorse this Constitution as the most important national document "[4]

Any revolutionary party like the PDPA must take cognisance of the objective realities and formulate policies on a scientific basis, without haste and without jumping stages of development That is why Dr Najibulla, General Secretary of the PDPA, Central Council, clarify that the Saur Revolution was not Communist nor Socialist, but Nationalist and Democratic

"In the Programme of Action of the PDPA, the April Revolution has been defined as a national and democratic revolution, i e , a revolution which ensures national progress through the realization of wide transformations with a democratic character Our revolution is not a proletarian and socialist revolution Irrespective of whatever our opponents claim, our party is not a communist party Sometimes we have been asked whether by defining the revolution and its new political system as a phenomenon having a universal and popular character, do we not lose our class and revolutionary approach and do we not retreat from our previous positions ?

"I declare with full conviction No, we neither lose nor surrender our principled positions "[6]

In a later speech, after his election as President of the Republic on November, 30, 1987, he dispelled all doubts about this issue, because, it was apt to confuse moslem masses on a sensitive issue

"It is true to say that the national democratic April Revolution is the outcome of the long anti despotic and anti-colonial lawful struggles of the Afghan people and is by no means a socialist or communist revolution and that the PDPA is not a communist party The national democratic revolution calls for the close mobilization and unity of all national and patriotic forces We respect these forces which hold in high esteem the high interests of the people and love

Afghanistan, our common home. I would like to say explicitly that we had no right to move alone in fulfilling the aspirations of the people for progress of the country; we should have started together with these forces and prepared the ground for their participation together with us in radical transformations in the country."[7]

The red bogey raised by slanderers is linked up with the anti-Islam propaganda. Dr. Najib in a speech in 1987 hit out against the disseminators of 'Islam in danger' :

"We would like to invite the Mullahs who are living on the other side to return to their homeland where great work is awaiting them. We have vacancies for 450 Mullahs in villages and 220 in the armed forces.

"Over two billion Afghanis have been allocated, in the course of last eight years, for building mosques and rendering assistance to the clergy. This sum is three times more than the sum spent for this purpose in 50 years before the revolution. So far over 1,000 Mullahs and religious scholars have been elected as deputies to local organs of state power and administration.

"Now let us see what the so-called "defenders of Islam" have accomplished for the Afghan Muslims. They have killed around 1,000 clergy on charge of serving the people and establishing peace in the country, destroyed hundreds of mosques and shown disrespect to tens of holy places, burnt religious books and volumes of holy Quran."[8]

Having seen many new mosques and prayed in one on a Friday congregation we may dismiss the charge of Islamophobia as mendacious mischief. Once the truth spreads, the lie will die a natural death. Now that the Constitution has enshrined Islam in Article two, the people outside will realize the policy of the D.R.A

Article 5 of the fundamental principles of the D.R.A. way back in 1978, had prescribed respect for the protection of the sacred religion of Islam as a Constitutional Principle. Even the PDPA adopted in 1982 a policy of reserving and safeguarding the rights of muslims, clergy and ulema. Currently, specialists in Shariat are working in the Supreme Court and lower Courts. There is a ministry for the first time in Afghan history to look after Islamic affairs.. There is a Supreme Council of ulemas and the clergy, now a collective member of the N.F.F. There are training centres for religious personnel. There is an Islamic Institute coming up in Kabul. The number of Haj

pilgrims from Afghanistan has considerably increased In short, Islam in now finding its finest spell in the D R A

The compulsions of political pluralism led the D R A to organize the National Fatherland Front, now placed in Article six of the Constitution itself That provision must be read together with Article Five They run thus

"Article five

In the Republic of Afghanistan, political parties are allowed to be formed, provided their platform, charter and activities are not opposed to the provisions of this Constitution and the laws of the country

A party formed in accordance with the provisiosn of the law cannot be dissolved without legal cause

"Article six

The national Front of the Republic of Afghanistan, as the broadest, socio political organisation, unites political parties, social organisations and individual memebrs included in its ranks for their active participation in the social, political and state spheres on the basis of a common programme ",

The Afghan economy accepts social and economic as well as political pluralism A feudal society cannot quantum jump to a socialist society except as a paper boast Speaking realistically, the basic law guarantees political freedom, private property and social action united to the PDPA Just read Art 19 for instance

"Article nineteen

In the Republic of Afghanistan, state, mixed, cooperative, trust, and private property as well as properties of political and social organisations exist

The state protects all forms of legal properties "[1]

Dr Najib, addressing the National Conference in 1987, explained

"The present Afghan society presents a multi colour picture in the economic, social, political, national, cultural and moral spheres

"Take our economy, for example, there exist, at the sametime, different basic economic institutions that need special approach not only in the sphere of economy but in the political and social fields as well These institutions from the point of view of socio economic character differ from each other Each one of them has its own way of evolution and each one has different possibilities of development

"But all of them are co existing, having relations somehow, depending on each other In the joint efforts we do not see such

relations in which one institution has tried to break the other or knock it out of econimic life. Here we come to the conclusion that first of all the social and economic sectors have created the need for a multi-party and coalition system. Purposeful utilization of all the institutions is number one task for stability and development of the country, for meeting all the needs and demands of the people. We do not forget that the economic institutions are not bookish and abstract categories. They are forms and modes of production in which majority of our compatriots are engaged. And all those who are engaged in this or that sector want their interests and demands to be looked after and reflected in the social and economic spheres."[11]

One of the critical questions bearing on peace, reunion and the politics of National Coalition is the mechanism and modalities for working out national reconciliation as a credible institution with an expanding horizon for operation.

The concept of National Reconciliation is the product of creative thinking in the context of a nation riven by divisive factions, fedual opposition, refugees seeking asylum in other countries and a state of tension and apprehension kept alive all the time by occasional explosions and political polemics, bitter and mala fide, aggravated by the U.S.A. and Pakistan. What is national reconciliation in the current Afghan milieu ?

"The principles of reconciliation are simple and understandable to everybody", General Secretary Najib said, addressing the plenary meeting of the PDPA Central Committee. "They mean a cease-fire and renunciation of the armed struggle and bloodshed in settling issues pertaining to Afghanistan's present and future;

"-just representation in the political structure and national economy;

"-non-persecution for previous political activities and general amnesty;

"-the preservation and development of historical, national and cultural traditions, and respect for the holy religion of Islam".

"As the Afghan leaders have pointed out, reconciliation is a strategic objective vital for the people as a whole and the Party as their political vanguard. At the same time, reconciliation also means tactics : a cease-fire, talks with the opposing side, cooperation on the basis of a coalition, acception and resettlement of refugees, restoration of the mosques, roads, bridges, hospitals, and schools destroyed in the war.

' The main working bodies in carrying out this policy are the extraordinary commissions on national reconciliation There were about 1,700 of them in April 1987 Most of them had been set up at the primary level, that is, in the villages These commissions function on a voluntary basis Their members include all those who cherish peace and are trusted by the common people Today these memebrs include elders, clergymen, Party and government officials, both those who support the DRA leadership and those who do not In all, there are some 4,000 former mujaheddins working on the commissions of national reconciliation throughout Afghanistan The activities of each commission are supposed to cluminate in the convening of a jirgah, the traditional form of the tribal council, where the conflicting sides are to sign a protocol on reconciliation Furthermore, the commissions also deal with problems linked with the resettlement of returning refugees, the distribution of relief supplies, and other urgent matters The commissions have wide powers to enable them to achieve their objectives They are authorized to hold talks with the opposition both inside and outside the country, to appeal for amnesty for prisoners, and to distribute funds coming from the government of from private individuals " x x x

"National reconciliation", Dr Najib pointed out, "implies not the surrender of the opposing side but honest and lasting coexistance through cooperation and confidence What kind of cooperation and confidence can there be if we preserve our organizations and at the same time deny them the right to express their specific interests through their own organizations and parties ? We have nothing to fear Our Party ranks are steadily growing and there is no other political organization in Afghanistan that is equal to it in strength and operates on a nationwide scale But let the other parties also function freely on the political scene " At its plenary meeting in June 1987, the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan adopted major decisions on the further democratization of our country It was noted that Afghanistan already has the pre-requisites needed for legalizing a number of parties and organizations which have existed for many years and which want to help the process of national reconciliation "We do not insist that these parties go along with the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan on matters of theory, strategy or tactics", Najib said,, "but each party must support the goal that is common to us all—the establishment of peace in Afghanistan " It was

stressed that there was a possibility of parties forming alliances which could involve the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan as well. And the basis for such alliances should be a commitment to peace.

The freedom of political activity will naturally lead to the fulfilment of yet another important condition for national reconciliation-the establishment of a coalition government.[12]

The roots of this great thought lie in the spiritual womb of the Quran. The Declaration of the Revolutionary Council of the D.R.A. brings out this lofty principle :

"In the name of Almighty God, the merciful and beneficient :

"In fact, believers are brothers, bring peace among brothers" (the Holy Koran).

"Today, in this historic moment, we appeal to the conscience and patriotic sentiments of you, the valorous sons of the homeland, to you Pashtoon, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Turkmen, Baluch, Nooristani, Pashaei brothers and sisters and to the entire tribes, nationalities and ethnic groups of Afghanistan, to all those who sincerely wish the wellbeing of our people and the prosperity of our beloved country.

"The history of our country is imbued with the heroic struggles of the valorous sons of this homeland for a free, properous and peaceful life. However, the moslem, pious and freedom-loving people of our country have seldom enjoyed the fulfilment of such wishes. Our people are thirsty for peace. In the course of the past years our country has been flooded by tears and blood. Innocent women, elderly and children are killed and mosques, schools, houses, gardens and the fields of the people are set on fire.

"All these acts are contradictory to the tenets of Holy Quran and the orders of Mohammad Sharia. God, the merciful and beneficient, orders moslems to keep peace in the Holy Koran :

"If two groups of moslems are killing each other, reconcile them".[13]

The machinery for the success of national reconciliation as a practical project was set up calling it the National Fatherland Front (N.F.F.). The work of the Front was to be carried out through Commissions, Peace Jirgahs, negotiations with armed groups, invitations to doubting coteries to come and see and join the peaceful work. Massive rural operations and friendly work in those regions which were not effectively under the Government's control were vital if national reconciliation was to acquire social locomotion. As Dr.

Najib explained in June 1987, the Front must be able to draw into its fold the clergy, the judges, doctors, teachers, elders and others who mattered in society One of the most respected citizens of Afghanistan, Mr Hatif, headed the Front Much has been accomplished, many refugees have returned A new draft constitution with a democratic ethos has been drawn up and placed for public debate Mr Hatif told us when he came to Delhi about the political liberalism and social pluralism and the patriotic activism built into the new Constitution Fundamental Rights were also written into its articles so that Human Rights would no longer be imperilled The whole effort was to transform the social order with a democratic, united, political base From "whoever is not with us, is against us", the emphasis was shifted to "whoever is not against us, is with us" This keynote thought informed all reconciliation work

The N F F has been involved even in the drawing up of the Five Year Plan and in inviting the toilers of the land into working for the improvement of economic life The wide scope of the NFF has been spelt out by Dr Najib

"The councils of the National Fatherland Front and the extraordinary commissions of national reconciliation in the localities should, taking into account the proposals of the peace jirgahs (assemblies) to be convened in the near future, set forth their suggestions regarding the solution of land and water issues, the interest of the peasants and landowners and the increasing of agricultural output These proposals are necessary for the compilation of normative documents which should respond to the principles of Islam, the character of national democratic revolution, the characteristics of the utilization of land in the country and the interests and aspirations of all the strata of our society under the condition of national reconciliation I want to point out that the extraordinary commissions for reconciliation have been authorised to stop, if necessary, the work of the operational groups of the land and water reforms when undertaking important and special measures on agrarian issues becomes necessary "[14]

The great advantage of the NFF headed by a non party independent of outstanding stature was that those who did not agree with the PDPA could join the Front The expansion of the NFF depended on neutral and even hostile elements willing to work for Afghanistan coming into its fold, undertaking to work for the people

in a spirit of patriotism; mobilisation of the people against the enemies of the country and revolutionary endeavour for the construction of a new society. No political monopoly for the PDPA was sought or got, tho' it was the most influential and strong Party in the country.

The NFF was also empowered to render assistance to refugees willing to return, to pardon Army Officers who had deserted, granting loans to returnees and extending even amensty once they were convincingly committed to the D.R.A.

One must agree that despite all these favourable circumstances, the number of refugees who returned were not significant compared to the few millions who were away from home. 'The petty done, the undone vast' has been the challenge. Of course, the major reason was the propaganda about the Soviet troops, the mujahideen's jehad based on monstrous misinformation, the instigation by Pakistan to the rebels to trade in turbulence and the heavy shower of military hardware and flood of obdurate dollars by the U.S.A. Iran's ayatollah obscurantism was also a fundamentalist factor inhibiting the return of refugees. Nevertheless, there is a qualitative change in the situation, as one reads the news about U.S.-U.S.S.R. negotiations, U.N. proximity talks, Pakistan's new inclinations for reconciliation and the thaw among the refugee groups, many of whom are anxious to see their own home since conditions have changed. The Seven Party Alliance of refugees and other like groupings show signs of homeward longings and of internal dissensions. The love of motherland is too powerful a gravitational pull, given hopes of political justice, freedom of activity and dedication to Islam. And this trinity of promises was real, as the Fatherland Front had repeatedly offered. To unmask falsehood and bring truth to light was the task of the Front. Biblically speaking, 'And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free' is the message to cross the Afghan frontiers.

The best comment on the success of the National Reconciliation Policy is contained in the following News Report :

"In Tashkent, Mr. Gorbachev and Mr. Najibullah said in a joint statement that the policy of national reconciliation made it possible to settle the situation in Afghanisatn, and the war and fratricide and form a coalition Government with the participation of the forces representing Afghan society.

The final status of the country would be determined by the Afghans themselves, the statement said.

The Soviet Union reiterated its support to Mr Najib's statement that Afghanistan's internal structure would rest on a multi-party system in the political field and on a multi sectoral basis in the economic sphere

Tass quoted Mr Najibullah as saying that he welcomed the readiness of the Soviet Union and the United States to act as guarantors of the Geneva accord "[15]

At long last, a decade after Saur guns gave power to the people, Afghans keep their rendezvous with their free destiny A Chapter of Independence under attack and revolution under violent pressure is drawing to a close Only a pause, a punctuation, because the moving finger of history writes and having writ moves on But once the people are on guard, the march, however long, never looks back

> "The revolution cast off the yoke for ever, Our ancient land is yound again Over its villages and towns Floats the banner of the Republic ! Arise, land of our fathers, The dark night is receding arise !
>
> —SULEIMAN LAIYEK

[1]Mohammed Ashraf, Afghanistan A Difficult Path To Peace pp 6-7
[2] Marx's positionis widely misunderstood When the essay in question was written opium was used in Europe almost exclusively for relieving pain Marx was using the word 'opium in this sense and not in the sense that religion is a stupefier deliberately administered to the people by agents of the ruling class —
Weekly People (official organ Socialist Labor Party) January 31, 1959 "
[3]THE HINDU dated 8-4-'88
[4]LOYA JIRGAH 1987 DOCUMENTS p-2
[5]*IBID* Page 3
[6]National Conference of the PDPA, 1987 Documents p3
[7]Loya Jirgah, 1987 Documents p-99
[8]National Conference of the PDPA 1987 Documents Page 83-84
[9]Loya Jirgah 1987 Documents Page-4
[10]*Ibid Page 8-9*
[11]*National Conference of the PDPA 1987 Documents Page 75 76*
[12]*Mohammad Ashraf Afghanistan A Difficult Path to Peace Page 8, 9 and 10*
[13]*National reconciliation Documents January 3 1987 Page 18 19*
[14]*Com Najib's Address to Nation Speech at Second NF Congress June 1987 Page 26-27*
[15]*The Indian Express* dated 8-4 88

CHAPTER VII

QUO VADIS AFGHANISTAN

"Revolutions are not made to order."

- V.I. LENIN

The Afghan panorama is unfolding itself with the quick changing colours of a lovely dawn after a long darkling night. April 1978 broke the tyranny and installed Tarakki and the PDPA to run the country as a people's democracy. What kind of democracy? Where the poor, the prisoner, the unequal gender, the exploited farmer, the landless labourer and the workless worker gained title to human justice. Said Lincoln:

> "As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy."

A society free from masters and slaves has sprung into life since Saur 1978 in Afghan country. Long years ago Engels observed that the "Afghans are a courageous, vigorous and freedom-loving people". (New American Encyclopedia 1958).

Ten years ago, the Afghan brothers and sisters gave to history proof of this quality. This mountain people, composed of ethnic complexity of over 20 nationalities like Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Turkmens, Hazaras and Nomadic tribes plus plus, are the founders of a democratic republic. When the monarchy of Dauod was smashed, the PDPA made the novelist and poet Tarakki the leaders. This first Afghan leader to assume democratic power was, interestingly enough, once a clerk in Bombay. This leftist poet passed decress on agrarian reform, universal literacy and measures of social justice and made in fundamental that Islam - not its reactionary distortions - shall be preserved and practised. A poet, alas, is often a poor artist of political power. And the PDPA cadres, in excesses and blunders, antagonised the feudal - theological forces by tactless zest. And a 'Cassius' whom Tarakki gullibly trusted - his name was Hafizullah Amin - with Wisconsin University education and C I A contact, treacherously plotted to assassinate Tarakki and take over power. He did. He played the leftist successor only to dismantle the democratic essence and inject the authoritarian virus. 'The dialectics

of history were such', Lenin once observed with universal validity, 'that the theoretical victory of Marxism compelled its enemies to *disguise themselves* as Marxists ' But Amin was discovered and dethroned by Babrak Karmal - a difficult enterprise and fraught with great risks Amin, later described by Karmal as Iago to Tarakki, was a pretender, an adventurist, a hard liner, according to Afghan evidence of the factions fathered by Amin The Karmalites regarded Afghan feudalism unready for a socialist leap, even with 'the dictatorship of the proletariat' It was a dangerously reckless and utterly infantile step But Amin, with demogogic skill, used this 'militancy' to reach power and use it with arrogance, terror and unconscionable tactics Karmal characterized Amin, whom he eased out, thus

> "The criminal acts of Amin and his henchmen inflicted enormous harm on the revolution Our people's traditions, religious beliefs, and way of life were ignored by the manner in which socio economic reforms were put into effect Subjectivism and leftist extremes undermined such important projects as the agrarian reform and the campaign to eradicate illiteracy among the adult population, among women in particular Little wonder the people began to militate against the barbarous methods used by the Amin gang to "enforce" these reforms In response, the population was subjected to the most brutal repressions Towns and villages were bombed and shelled, and thousands of innocent people were killed These criminal acts, the gross infractions of revolutioary legality, the arrests, the tortures, and the executions without trial or investigation confused and sowed widespread confusion [1]

Karmal's line was more realistic, less adventurist, more democratic and nationalist, less socialist shot with proletarian dictatorship He justified himself ideologically by quoting Leninst scripture

> "Let us recall that Lenin, addressing the revolutionaries of the East, said wherever such parties might emerge, they would have to work

> among the mass of the peasants and take into account their way of thinking and traditions including religious traditions. The peasant of the East, Lenin said, is a typical member of the working mass. But even in such countries, he added, the parties taking the working-class stand could give a lead to the national movement and develop in the peasant mass the capacity for independent political thinking and for independent political activity... At the same time, considering the general uniformities of revolution, including national-democratic revolutions, we are absolutely sure that the forces loyal to the ideology of the working class can carry out such revolution even in a country where the working class is not strong enough. But for that, I repeat, the national, tribal and religious traditions, and the people's immediate demands must be taken scrupulously into account. However, all these principles were trampled by Amin his henchmen."[2]

Karmal's analysis won and used Islam, principled compromises, native democratic traditions and political pluralism to enter the *evolutionary phase* of the Revolution. He could see with clarity what Lenin and laid down: 'Whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will *never* live to see it.'

The mujahiddin (the holy warriors) had to be defeated with Islamic weaponry. Women, traditionally walled off, had to be liberated; agrarian justice had to be done; illiteracy had to be abolised; the U.S. - Pak conspiracy had to be struck down. Human Rights and Independent Judiciary had to be established.

> And what had extremist Tarakki done?
> "A country whose population has been variously put at 15 to 18 million was dominated mainly by landlords, three percent of whom owned over 70 percent of the land. Along with landlordism came a feudal religion - Islam. Most of the Moslems were Sunnite (80 percent), while the minority about 20 percent) were Shiite. Although the Pushtuns are the major national group, there are 22 other national minorities as well, divided into tribes and clans. The

principal languages are Pushtu and Dari, in both of which the national business is conducted But since Karmal came to power efforts to give all the languages in the country, in addition to Dari and Pushtu, which are the two official languages, an equal dignity have been vigorously pushed

"The first actions of the new government in 1978, headed by Tarakki, included expropriating the huge tracts of land from the big landlords - 40,000 of them making instant "refugees" and "holy warriors" who turned to the "free world", where public education and health care had existed for generations, to help them get their lands backs, and the illiteracy and diseases that went with them

"In the first six months after the April Revolution 300,000 peasants received expropriated land A maximum of 30 jeribs (one jerib equals one half acre) was allotted to each This was a daring, revolutionary act which cut broadly but as it would later be admitted - not too discriminately Nor did it mean that once the peasant had a legal right to the land he forthwith assumed psychological ownership of it and tilled it as really his own It was, in fact, for many a peasant too shocking a fact to digest, that from landless, deepest poverty and ignorance he should become a landowner overnight, as a gift! His sense of dependency on the landlord for everything, his generations, inbred conviction that he was nothing in the sight of Allah and his landlord (who seemed to go together), his superstitution that life for him was predestined to toil and deprivation these were profoundly rooted psychological obstacles which no mere proclamation from Kabul could overcome Some dead counter revolutionaries were discovered with land deeds still in their pockets - deeds presented to them by the Tarakki government but which they had not dared to believe They died fighting to restore land that could have been theirs - to Allah and their landlords!

"Many also feared that the power which donated the land to them was not strong enough to protect them in their possession of it. Deep was the fear of the landowner, buttressed by the fear of the wrath of Allah, instilled in the peasant by thousands of mullahs, some of whom were themselves landowners. Taking over real ownership of the land, therefore, proceeded slowly. In addition, counter revolutionaries came out of Pakistan at night and burned the peasant's field, his home, his wife and children, and himself. In the beginning not only did Amin, whose responsibility it was to protect him, fail to do so, it seemed as time wore on that it was deliberate policy to fail to do so. In any case, by 1980 and 180,000 families had joined the cooperatives and were farming their lands their lands in this mutual-aid form - a higher level of consciousness beyond individual farming. With the entry of Karmal on the scene new measures were taken to reassure the peasants that the land belonged to them and that they would be protected in holding it.

"Another of the early acts taken by the Tarakki government after coming to power was truly revolutionary one of abolishing usury, which was done in July 1978, as Decree No. 6. As an almost pure feudal society, usury flourished in Afghanistan as it had (and does) in all feudal societies. The peasant was literally bound to the usurer whose high interest rates on his primary loan (which was often nominal) - amounting to 45 percent annually - could never to paid. Debt mounted on debt, and if the peasant had no property that could be sold, he sold his children. He himself literally worked to death.

"Canceling the peasants' debt to usury literally lifted a burden of 33,000,000 Afghanis from the backs of 80 percent of the population, which meant liberating about 11 million individuals. Some 160,000 families of peasants had their fines for tax

delinquency of payments, amounting to 822,000,000 Afghanis, canceled These acts no doubt impoverished thousands of usurers who could not have looked upon the Tarakki government more kindly therefore They, too, became instant Mujahiddin, "holy warriors" so beloved of the editorial writers of the Times and Post and State Department poets

"The status of women was even more typically feudal That is, women had fewer rights than some animals who were more necessary to survival They were not only slaves in society, but inside the home they were doubly, even triply slaves to their husbands and to the male children They could be and were sold into marriage as children, were forced to wear the chadri from the age of 13 until the night of their wedding - usually the first time they saw the face - and age - of their new husbands If they were fortunate enough to be married to a rich man they very likely had to share his bed and board with other wives It was legal to have four wives, and 10 percent of Afghan men had more than one wife (and concubines)

"It hardly has to be added that they were kept illiterate, profoundly religious, backward in every respect except in those skills and talents needed to serve their husbands While the husband was free to indulge himself in every luxury and vice (according to his wealth and taste), punishment of the straying wife (and of the single women) was merciless As late as 1970, Kabul's mullahs had held a month's demonstration against women wearing min skirts, and had attacked some of the liberated women with acid And in Saudi Arabia, a "modal" feudal society still, where Brzezinski's "arc" held fast, as late as 1982 religious police (mutawwa) went about the city cracking the knees of women in short skirts with their clubs (NYT, Feb 7, 1982) As for Pakistan, erring wives could be and were stoned to death, while in Iran the walls held slogans calling

for "Death to women whose heads are uncovered" (NYT, Apr. 21, 1982).

"After coming to power the Tarakki government launched immediately an extensive campaign to abolish illiteracy, and though this campaign suffered from the same distortions that every other aspect of his policies did, and for reasons both "natural" and "unnatural" still the distortions did not affect the basic validity and need for the programs. People needed the become literate. That dreadful mistakes were made in applying the policy does not affect the need for the policy itself.

"In fact, when Karmal came to power he did not criticize the Tarakki government's program in principle but only in administration. The problems were many, the time was short, the cadres for carrying out the program were untrained and, in addition, among them were conscious and unconscious saboteurs. But it was necessary to improve the health of the population, teach the children, liberate the women, break up the feudal landholdings, eliminate usury, build homes and promote industry. That they should bungle some of these tasks would have been inevitable even under the most favourbale conditions. But the conditions under which they tried to drag the 12th century into the 20th - almost literally by the hair - were anything but favourable."[3]

The April uprising, spearked off by the police - inspired assassination of Mr. A. Khyber, founder member of the PDPA, led to the exit of Daoud. Tarakki's infantile 'left' extremism and Amin's pro-imperialist betrayal yielded place to the Karmal era which vitalised Afghan democracy with visible humanism on all fronts. The Soviet assistance, developmental and military, played a decisive role in this regeneratin and defeat of the great game of counter-revolution. Soviet aid has been a perennial crop from the days of Amanullah Khan to Amin and after.

Karmal, who had earned the nation's gratitude, gave place to young Najib who is now in the saddle as President of the D.R.A. Remarkable changes have taken place. Counter-revolution is in

retreat A phase or pause of peace has come Perhaps, as poet Daqiqi of Balkh wrote

> "The world has become peaceful
> For both tiger and deer".

But Afghan leaders cannot be complacent. Must be eternally vigilant since that is the price of liberty

> "O ye, who lead,
> Take heed!
> Blindness we may forgive,
> but baseness we will smite" -
>
> - WILLIAM VAUGHN MOODY

Normalcy is returning Refugees are trekking back tardily The elections to local bodies have taken place Parliamentary elections too have been recently held Reuter, reporting from Islamabad on 5th April states

> The Afghan Government held parliamentary elections on Tuesday as its nine year-old war with Muslim guerrillas raged on

The Government issued fressh appeals to the rebels to participte and invited UN human rights officials to monitor the polls

A statement by a pro-Government political alliance carried by the official Bakhtar New Agency on Tuesday said "all the people of Afghanistan, including the oppostion forces (must) take an active part in this important phenomenon"

The elections will run until April 14 Voters will directly elect a 229 seat House of Representatives and one third of a 186-seat Senate

Another third of the Senate will be chosen by provincial councils and the remainder nominated by the President, Mr Najibullah

The "New Left Democratic Bloc" consists of Mr Najibullah's ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) and two other groups the Toilers of Afghanistan and the Toilers Revolutionary Organisation of Afghanistan

The rebels have denounced the polls as a deception They have vowed to continue fighting until the last Soviet soldier leaves Afghanistan and an Islamic Government is established "

The Soviet troops will begin soon their journey home The

Constitution has been drafted, discussed and enacted by a full Loya Jirgah. Dr. Najib is President of the D.R.A. The Afghan Accord, achieved under U.N. auspices and guaranteed by the U.S. and U.S.S.R., gives hope where despair darkened the air. The seven-party alliance of mujahiddeen has rejected the Accord but Kabul is self-reliant enough to silence the dollar-less "godists".

A democratic republic has blossomed in Afghanistan. A Constitution, with human rights guaranteed, elections assured, judiciary independent, in foreign policy non-aligned, and National Assembly and Loya Jirgah as representative institutions has created a humanist, democratic constitutional order. It is an eclectic effort and has the Afghan flavour. This Founding Deed inaugurates, the New Afghan Order. It is for the people to make their future. Remarkable socio-economic advance has been registered already. But they have miles to go to redeem their tryst with Saur destiny. After all, the "blood, toil, tears and sweat" of the people is the real resource of a country, not the capital it begs and borrows. Says Abraham Lincoln :

> "Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labour is superior to capital, and deserves the higher consideration."
>
> -ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Afghan history is being written by its millions under propitious opportunities.

> "There is a tide in the affairs of men,
> which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
> Omitted, all the voyage of their life
> Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
> On such a full sea are we now afloat,
> And we must take the current when it serves,
> Or lose our ventures."
>
> - SHAKESPEARE.

[1]Washington's Secret War Against Afghanistan Phillip Bonosky Page-41
[2]*IBID.* Page 66-67
[3]*IBID.* Page 70-72

Appendix I

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE BENEFICENT, THE MERCIFUL.

Our beloved homeland Afghanistan has a proud history rich with the heroic struggles of our brave people for freedom, independence, national sovereignty, democracy and social progress

The changes that have taken place in our country in the course of recent years have provided favourable conditions for achieving high objectives, progress of the homeland and prosperity of the people

In the present stage, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, as the propounder and organizer of the policy of national reconciliation actively carried forward, together with other political, national and democratic forces, this humanitarian policy

Therefore, in order to

—Consolidate the independence, national sovereignty and defend the territorial integrity of the country,

—Achieve reconciliation and strengthen national unity keeping in view the objective realities, the favourite traditions and customs of the people,

—Ensure social justice and eqality,

—Develop national economy and raise the living standards of the people,

—Raise the role and authority of our beloved homeland Afghanistan in the international arena,

We, the representatives of the people of Afghanistan in the Loya Jirgah, conscious of the historic changes that have taken place in our homeland and in the contemporary world, following the tenets of the sacred religion of Islam, preserving and enriching the heritage of the constitutional movement of the country, respecting the United Nations' Charter and the Universal Declration of Human Rights, endorse this Constitution as the most important national document

CHAPTER ONE
FOUNDATIONS OF POLITICAL SYSTEM

The Republic of Afghanistan is an independent, unitary and indivisible state having sovereignty over the whole of its territory

National sovereignty in the Republic of Afghanistan belongs to the people. The people exercise national sovereignty through Loya Jirgah, National Assembly and local councils.

Article two: The sacred religion of Islam is the religion of Afghanistan. In the Republic of Afghanistan no law shall run counter to the principles of the sacred religion of Islam and other values enshrined in this Constitiution.

Article three: The Republic of Afghanistan is a nonaligned country which does not join any military bloc and does not allow establishment of foreign military bases on its territory.

Article four: The defence of independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity is the fundamental duty of the state. The state ensures the security and defence capability of the counry and equips the armed forces.

Article five: In the Republic of Afghanistan, political parties are allowed to be formed, provided their platform, charter and activities are not opposed to the provisions of this Constitution and the laws of the country.

A party formed in accordance with the provisions of the law cannot be dissolved without legal cause.

Article six: The National Front of the Republic of Afghanistan, as the broadest, socio-political organisation, unites political parties, social organisations and individual members included in its ranks for their active participation in the social, political and state spheres on the basis of a common programme.

Article seven: Trade unions and social organisations are allowed to be formed in the Republic of Afghanistan in accordance with the law. The state assists in promoting the role of trade unions, peasants, cooperatives, youth, women's and other social organisations in all spheres of social, political, economic and cultural life of the country and ensures the cooperation and mutual relations of state organs with them.

Article eight: Pashtu and Dari are official languages among the national languages of the country.

Article nine: The state emblem of Republic of Afghanistan consists of a rising sun, adytum and pulpit with a green background, ensconced in two sheaves of wheat, a wheel and with a tricolour ribbon in black, red and green.

Article ten: The state flag of the Republic of Afghanistan is a tricolour divided into three horizontal equal parts in black, red and

green stripes The emblem shall be placed on both sides of the upper quarter of the flag, close to the mast The length of the flag shall be double its width.

Article elevan: The capital of the Republic of Afghanistan is Kabul.

Article twelve: The national anthem of the Republic of Afghanistan shall be approved by the House of Representatives.

CHAPTER TWO
FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC SYSTEM

Article thirteen: The Republic of Afghanistan is a multi-national country. The state shall follow the policy of all round growth, understanding, friendship and cooperation between all nationalities, clans and tribes of the country for ensuring political, economic, social and cultural equality and rapid growth and development of regions which are socially, economically and culturaly backward The state shall gradually prepare the grounds for the creation of administrative units based on national characteristics

Article fourteen: The state shall adopt necessary measures for the growth of culture, language and literature of the people of Afghanistan as well as preserve and develop the worthy cultural, traditional, linguistic, literary and folkloric legacy of all nationalities, clans and tribes.

Article fifteen: In the Republic of Afghanistan family constitutes the basic unit of the society.

The state shall adopt necessary meausres for ensuring the health of mother and child and for the upbringing of children

Article sixteen: The state takes permanent care of the young generation and provides necessary opportunities for their education, employment, recreation, rest, spiritual and physical growth and shall help the blossoming of the talents of the youth.

Article seventeen: The state shall promote construction to provide state and cooperative housing and help in the construction of private houses.

Article eighteen: The state shall implement the economic policy aimed at mobilization and utilization of the country's resources for removing backwardness, raising the living standards of the people and development of socio-economic structure of the society. Towards this end, the state shall formulate and put into practice socio-economic development plans.

Article nineteen: In the Republic of Afghanistan, state, mixed, cooperative, trust, and private property as well as properties of political and social organisations exist.

The state protects all forms of legal properties.

Article twenty: Mineral resources, forests, pastures and other natural wealth, basic energy resources, historic relics, banks, insurance institutions, means of communications, radio, television, major dams, ports, main means of production in heavy industry, transport ways and air transport shall be state property.

The state shall develop and strengthen the state sector of the economy.

Article twentyone: The state shall assist strengthening and expansion of cooperatives and shall encourage the voluntary participation of the people to this end.

Article twentytwo: The state encourages and protects the activity of individual craftsmen and their voluntary participation in trade unions and cooperatives and renders all-round assistance for upgrading their professional skill, ensuring the supply of raw materials to them and sale of their output.

Article twentythree: The state guarantees the right of the ownership of land of the peasants and other land owners in accordance with the law.

The state shall adopt necessary measures for implementation of democratic changs in agriculture keeping in view the interests of peasants and other land owners.

The state encourages the establishment of big agricultural and mechanised state, mixed and private farms and helps the reclamation of virgin land.

Article twentyfour: The state guarantees by law the use of pastures by nomads and livestock breeders. The state shall assist in the creation of proper conditions for the growth of animal husbandry, sale of livestock products and improvement of economic, social and living standards of nomads and livestock breeders.

Article twentyfive: The state shall guarantee the security of private investment for the growth of national economy and protect and encourage the participation of national capital holders in the development of industry, commerce, construction, transport, agriculture and service in accordance with the law.

The state shall expand all-round and beneficial relations with

private entrepreneurs and protect the private sector against the competition of foreign capital The state shall take into account the interests of private sector, in accordance with law, while working out the financial, credit, customs and price policies

Article twentysix: In the Republic of Afghanistan, domestic and foreign trade are directed and regulated by the state, observing the people's interests

Towards this end, the state encourages the activity of national capital holders in the expansion of export and import of goods and development of wholesale and retail trade, and undertakes the fixing and controlling of prices

The state shall encourage the augmentation of production and raising of the quality of export goods and protects them against the competition of foreign capital and monopolies

Article twentyseven For the growth of the national economy, the state permits foreign investment in the Republic of Afghanistan and regulates it in accordance with the law

Article twentyeight In the Republic of Afghanistan, no foreign citizen shall enjoy the right to own immovable property Subject to the approval of the government, immovable property may be sold to diplomatic missions and foreign governments on a reciprocal basis and also to international organisations in which the Republic of Afghanistan is a member

Article twentynine. The heriditary right to property shall be guaranteed by law on the basis of Islamic Shariat

Article thirty Expropriation is allowed only in public interest and against just and prior compeensation in accordance with the law

Article thirtyone In the Republic of Afghanistan, the criteria, rates and types of taxes and duties shall be determined on the basis of law and social justice

Article thirtytwo The state shall adopt and implement necessary measures for the proection of nature natural wealth and reasonable utilisation of natural resources improvement of living environment prevention of pollution of water and air, and conservation and survival of animals and plants

CHAPTER THREE
CITIZENSHIP, BASIC RIGHTS, FREEDOMS AND DUTIES OF CITIZENS

Article thirtythree: The citizenship of the Republic of

Afghanistan is equal and uniform to all citizens. Acquisition and loss of citizenship and other matters related to it are regulated by law. Every individual having citizenship of the Republic of Afghanistan in accordance with the law, shall be called on Afghan.

Article thirtyfour: No citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan shall be exiled inside or outside the country.

Aritcle thirtyfive: No citizen of the Republic of Afghanistan shall be extradicted to a foreign state.

Article thirtysix: The citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan living aborad enjoy the protection of the state. The state shall defend their rights and legal interests, strengthen the relations of Afghans living abroad with the country, and help thier return to the homeland.

Article thirtyseven: The Republic ot Afghanistan guarantees, according to the law, the rights and freedoms of foreign citizens and individuals residing in Afghanistan without citizenship. They are bound to obey the Constituion and othr laws of the Republic of Afghanistan.

Article thirtyeight: Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan, both men and women, have equal rights and duties in the eyes of the law, irrespective of their national, racial, linguistic, tribal, educational and social status, religion, creed, political conviction, occupation, kinship, wealth, and residence.

Designation of any illegal privilege or discrimination against rights and duties of citizens are forbidden.

Article thirtynine: Right to life is the natural right of every human being. No person shall be deprived of this right unless by law.

Article forty: In the Republic of Afghanistan, the freedom to perform religious rites is guaranteed to all Muslims. Followers of other religions are free to perform their religious rites. No individual has the right to abuse religion for anti-national and anti-people propaganda purposes, creation of enmity and commission of other deeds contrary to the interests of the Republic of Afghanistan.

Article fortyone: Liberty is the natural right of every human being. This right is unlimited, except in so far as its harms the freedom of others and public interests, as defined by law.

Liberty nad human dignity are inviolable and the state respects and protects them. Innocence is the original state and the accused is presumed innocent unless found guilty by a final verdict of a court of law.

—No act is considered a crime, except as prescribed by law

—No person shall be accused of committing a crime unless in accordance with the provisions of the law

—No person can be arrested or detained, except in accordance with the law

—No person can be punished unless by a verdict of a court, in accordance with the provisions of law and in proportion to the crime committed

—Crime is a personal deed, no other person shall be punished for its commission

—The accused has the right to defend himself personally or through an advocate

Article fortytwo· In the Republic of Afghanistan, punishment incompatible with human dignity, torture and excruciation are prohibited Obtaining confession, testimony or statement from an accused or any other person by compulsion or threat is prohibited Statements or testimony taken from an accused or other person by means of compulsion shall not be valid

A public servant who tortures an accused or any other person for obtaining statements, testimony or confession, or who issues orders for torture, shall be punished in accordance with the law Acting on the orders of superiors in the commission of unlawful deeds cannot be the ground for the plea of innocence

Article fortythree Indebtedness cannot be cause of deprivation of a person's liberty

The ways and means of recovering debts shall be regulated by the law

Article fortyfour In the Republic of Afghanistan the invoilability of residence is guaranteed No person, including a state representive, can enter or search a residence without the permission of the resident and except in circumstances and under procedures prescribed by the law

Article fortyfive In the Republic of Afghanistan, confidentility of correspondence, telephone conversations, telegrams and other communications is guaranteed

Article fortysix Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan who suffer in the performance of their duties unlawful damage by state organs, social organisations and responsible officials are entitled to compensation, conditions and procedures of which shall be regulated by law

fortyseven: Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan are entitled to take part in socio-political life and the administration of the state, directly or through their representatives.

Article fortyeight: Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan have the right to elect or be elected. Conditions and procedures of exercising this right shall be regulated by law.

Article fortynine: Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan enjoy the right of freedom of thought and expression.

Citizens can exercise this right openly, in speech and in writing, in accordance with the provisions of the law.

Pre-censorship of the press is not allowed.

Article fifty: Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan have the right to assembly, peaceful demonstration and strike, in accordance with the provisions of the law.

Article fiftyone: Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan enjoy the right to petition, criticise and make suggestions, either individually or collectively.

State organs, social organistions and responsible officials are bound to consider the petitions, criticisms and proposals and take necessary actions in regard to them within the time prescribed by law. Surveillance for criticism is forbidden.

Article fiftytwo: Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan have the right to work and are entitled to equal pay for equal work. The state, through enactment and application of just and progressive labour laws, shall provide necessary conditions for the citizens to enjoy this right.

Article fiftythree: Imposition of forced labour is forbidden.

Performance of compulsory labour in war time, natural calamity and other states of emergency which threaten public life and order shall be excluded from this.

Article fiftyfour: Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan, subject to the needs of the society and on the basis of the specialisation, have the right to hold state posts and choose their occupation.

Article fiftyfive: Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan have the right to rest.

The state defines the working hours and the periodic holidays with pay and the specifications of work during holidays, festivals, Ids and shall provide conditions for rest, growth of cultural, artistic establishments, physical training, sports and healthy recreation.

Article fiftysix: Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan have the right to free education.

The state shall adopt necessary measures for eradication of illiteracy, generalisation of balanced education, education in mother tongue, ensuring compulsory primary education, gradual expansion of general, intermediate, technical and vocational education, and growth of the system of higher education for training national cadres In the Republic of Afghanistan foreign nationals are allowed to establish schools in accordance with the provisions of the law These schools shall be for use of foreigners only

Article fiftyseven Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan have the right to health and social security

The state shall adopt necessary measures for expansion of all round, balanced and countrywide medical services, expansion of hospitals, health centres, training of doctors and personnel for medical services, universal prevention of diseases, expansion of free health services, arrangement and encouragement of private medical services improvement of material welfare of the aged, war and work disabled and dependents of martyrs

Article fifty eight: Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan have the right to scientific, technical and artistic activities

The state ensures systematic progress of science and training of scientific cadres, protects the rights of authors and inventors, encourages and protects scientific research in all spheres and generalizes the effective use of the results of scientific research

Article fifty nine Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan have the right to travel and free choice of settlement and residence in the country

The state is authorized to ban temporarily travel, settlement and residence in particular areas of the country for the purposes of maintaining security and public order, prevention of epidemic diseases and protection of the rights and liberties of indivudals

Article sixty Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan enjoy according to law the right to travel abroad and return home

Article sixtyone Every citizen of the Republic of Afghanistan is bound to observe the Constitution and the laws of the Republic of Afghanistan

Ignorance of provisions of law is no excuse

Article sixtytwo Citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan and foreigners are bound to pay taxes and duties of the state in accordance with the provisions of the law

Article sixtythree The defence of homeland, independence,

national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country is the proud duty of the citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan. Conditions of service in the armed forces shall be regulated by law.

Article sixtyfour: The state shall provide necessary conditions for the citizens to exercise their fundamental rights and liberties and discharge their duties.

No person has the right to exercise the right and liberties enshrined in the law against public interest and to the detriment of the rights and liberties of other citizens.

CHAPTER FOUR
LOYA JIRGAH

Article sixtyfive : The Loya Jirgah is the highest manifestation of the will of the people of Afghanistan in accordance with national historical traditions.

Article sixtysix : The Loya Jirgah consists of :

1. Members of the National Assembly.
2. Ten people's deputies from each province and its equivalent.
3. Government of provinces and Mayor of Kabul.
4. Prime Minister, deputy Prime Ministers and members of the council of Ministers.
5. Chief justice, deputy chief justices and judges of the Supreme Court.
6. Attorney General and his deputies.
7. Chairman and members of the Constitution Council.
8. Members of the executive board of the National Front.
9. A maximum of fifty persons from among prominent political, scientific, social and spiritual figures to be appointed by the President on the basis of the recommendation of the secretariat of the National Front.

Article sixtyseven : The Loya Jirgah enjoys the following powers :

1. To approve and amend the Constitution.
2. To elect the President and to accept the President's resignation.
3. To consent to the most important questions regarding the destiny of the country.
4. To adopt decisions on the most important questions regarding the destiny of the country.

Article sixtyeight : Save in cases otherwise defined in this

Constitution, the Loya Jirgah shall be summoned and opened by the President and its sessions shall be held under the chairmanship of the President or any other person appointed by the President as his regent

The quorum for the Loya Jirgah shall be two third of its members present

Article sixtynine : During the time when the House of Representatives remains dissolved, its members shall retain their membership of the Loya Jirgah till a new house is elected

Article seventy : Elections to Loya Jirgah shall be regulated by law and its procedure laid down by the Loya Jirgah itself

CHAPTER FIVE
THE PRESIDENT

Article seventyone The President is the head of the state and shall exercise his powers in legislative, executive and judicial spheres in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and laws of the Republic of Afghanistan

Article seventytwo : The president shall be elected by a majority vote of the members of the Loya Jirgah for a term of seven years No person can be elected as President for more than two terms The President is accountable and shall be called to elect a new President thirty days before the end of the term of office of the outgoing President

Article seventythree Any Muslim citizen of the Republic of Afghanistan who has completed the age of forty and who and whose wife are born of Afghan parents and enjoys civil and political rights can be elected President

Article seventyfour : The President, after being elected shall take the following oath

"I swear in the name of Allah, the Almighty, to protect the principles of sacred religion of Islam, observe the Contitution of Republic of Afghanitan and supervise its implementation, safeguard the independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan, preserve the basic rights and freedoms of the citizens and exert all my efforts to ensure social justice, people's prosperity, strengthening of peace and progress of the country"

Article seventyfive . The President shall enjoy the following powers in addition to those entrusted to him by other provisions of the Constitution

1. Supreme command of the armed forces.
2. To sign laws and resolutions of the National Assembly.
3. To appoint the Prime Minister designate to form the government.
4. To approve the head and members of the government after they have received the vote of confidence of the National Assembly and to accept their resignations.
5. To convene and preside over the Council of Ministers when necessary.
6. To approve the appointment, promotion and pension of judges, high ranking officials and officers of the armed forces, according to the provisions of the law
7. Take decisions on ascertaining public opinion or holding referendum on major political, social and economic issues.
8. Pardon and remit sentences.
9. Accredit the heads of diplomatic missions of the Republic of Afghanistan to foreign countries and international organisations.
10. Accept the credentials of the heads of diplomatic missions of foreign states of the Republic of Afghanistan.
11. Proclaim a state of emergency, general and partial mobilization and their termination.
12. Declare war and armistice with the consent of Loya Jirgah.
13. Authorize the issue of money.
14. Grant citizenships and asylum, in accordance with the law.
15. Grant honorary orders, medals and titles as per the law.
16. Exercise other powers in accordance with the law.

Article seventysix : The President shall continue in office till the end of his term except in the event of protracted and incurable illness and/or resignation. In all cases when the President is unable to discharge his duties, the presidential functions shall be entrusted to the first Vice-President.

In case of permanent loss of ability to work, death or resignation of the President, the first Vice-President shall invite the Loya Jirgah within one month to elect a new President.

In the event of resignation, the President shall submit his resignation directly to the Loya Jirgah.

CHAPTER SIX
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Article seventyseven : The National Assembly is the highest

legislative organ of the Republic of Afghanistan

Article seventyeight . The National Assembly consists of two houses House of Representatives and Senate

Article seventynine : The members of the House of Representatives shall be elected from electoral consituencies having equal population, for a legislative term of five years

Member of Senate (senators) are elected and appointed in the following manner

1 Two persons from each province and equivalent units for a period of five years

2 Two persons from among the members of each provincial council and its equivalent elected by the council for a term of three years

3 The remaining one third of the members shall be appointed for a period of three years by the President from amongst well informed, scholarly, prestigious and national figures

Article eighty · The number, conditions, procedure of election and appointment of the members of the National Assembly shall be regulated by law

Article eightyone · In addition to other powers prescribed in this constitution, the National Assembly shall enjoy the following powers

1 To approve, amend and repeal laws and legislative decrees and to present them to the president for signature

2 To interpret laws

3 To ratify and annul international treaties

4 To approve socio-economic development plans and endorse the government's report on their execution

5 To approve the state budget and evaluate the report on its execution

6 To establish administrative units and make changes in them

7 To establish and abolish ministries and central organs equivalent to them

8 To decide on the appointment and removal of Vice—Presidents on the basis of recommendation and request of the President

9 To authorize the state to receive loans and grant privileges of substantial importance in national economy, including monopoly

10 To institute by law honorary orders, medals and titles

11. To endorse establishment of relations with foreign countries and international organisations.

12. To elicit replies from the Prime Minister and other members of government concerning performance relating to their authority during interpellations session.

Article eighty two : The House of Representatives shall have the following exclusive powers :

1. To pass a vote of confidence or no-confidence in the Council of Ministers or one of its members.

2. To take final decision on the draft plans for economic and social development and the state budget in the event of disagreement between the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Article eightythree : Each house of the National Assembly shall appoint at its first session, a commission from among its members to authenticate the credentials.

The commission shall report the results of its findings to the house concerned.

The house shall confirm the credentials of the deputies of the National Assembly on the basis of the report and in case of violation of the electoral law, the hosue shall declare the credentials of the members concerned as invalid.

Article eightyfour : The House of Representatives elects at its first session from among its members an executive committee composed of a chairman, two deputy chairmen and two secretaries for the whole term of the legislature.

The Senate elects from among its members an executive committee composed of a chairman for a term of five years, two deputy chairmen and two secreatries for a term of one year. The chairman of each house of the National Assembly shall conduct and maintain order in the respective sessions of the house. In the absence of the chairman, one of the deputy chairmen shall discharge his duties.

Article eightyfive : The ordinary sessions of the National Assembly are held twice a year, in the first week of the month of Sunbula and the first week of the month of Hoot. Each regular session of the National Assembly shall not extend to more than three months. If the National Assebly is discussing the annual budget or the development plan, its session shall not be wound up before their endorsement. If the budget is not endorsed before the beginning of the fiscal year, the budget of previous year shall apply till the endorsement of the new annual budget.

An extraordinary session of the National Assembly can be held on the decision of the President, request of chairman of either hosue or of one fifth of members of each house

Article eightysix : The houses of National Assembly shall hold separate or joint sessions The joint sessions of the National Assembly are chaired alternately by their chairmen

The President inaugurates and concludes the session of the National Assembly The first session of National Assembly shall be summoned by the President, thirty days after the conclusion of the elections to House of Representatives

Article eightyseven : The quorum for both houses of the National Assembly shall be completed when two third of the members of each house are present The decision of each house is passed by a majority vote of its total membership

Article eightyeight : The separate and joint sessions of the houses of National Assembly shall be open, unless the houses decide to meet in closed sessions The proceedings of the debates of both the houses shall be recorded

Article eightynine : Each house of the National Assembly shall elect from among its members standing commissions for the issues within its competence and the supervision of the implementation of laws and decisions of the house

Article ninety : Each house of the National Assembly is empowered to constitute investigation, auditing and other temporary commissions as may be required

The tasks and procedures of the investigation and auditing commissions shall be regulated by the respective houses of the National Assembly

Article ninetyone : Members of the House Representatives have the right to put questions to the Prime Minister or any member of the government in the interpellations session Answers to the questions shall be presented in writing or orally

The House of Representative can consider on the basis of the answers presented the motion of vote of confidence in the government A government which fails to receive the vote of confidence shall continue in office till a new government is formed

Article ninetytwo : Members of the Council of Ministers, having consultative vote may attend the meetings of the National Assembly

Article ninetythree : Members of the National Assembly have the right to vote and express their views in separate and joint sessions No

member of the National Assembly shall be subjected to legal prosecution for a vote or views expressed inside or outside the National Assembly.

Save in cases of prima facie evidence of crimes, no member of the National Assembly can be arrested, detained or subjected to judicial surveillance without the consent of the House concerned or without the consent of its executive committee during the interval between two sessions of the National Assembly. If a member of the National Assembly is arrested on a prima facie case, the executive committee of the house concerned shall be informed.

Article ninetyfour : The following authorities have the right to propose introduction, amendment and repeal of law in each house of the National Assembly :

1. The President.
2. The standing commissions of the National Assembly.
3. At least one tenth of membership of each house.
4. The Council of Ministers.
5. The Supreme Court.
6. Attorney General.
7. The executive board of the National Front.
8. Council of Ulema and Clergymen.

Article ninetyfive : Save in cases defined otherwise in this constitution, the decisions of one of the houses relating to powers described under Article eightyone shall be delivered to the other house. If the decision of one house is rejected by the other, a joint committee consisting of an equal number of members of both houses shall be set up. The decision of the joint committes shall come into force after it is signed by the President. if the joint committee fails to resolve differences, the matter shall be discussed in the joint session of the National Assembly and decision taken by a majority vote of the joint session.

Article ninetysix : The decisions of the National Assembly are enforced after signature by the President.

In case the President does not agree with the decisions of the National Assembly, he can return them to the National Assembly within 30 days from the date of receipt along with his reasons. After the elapse of this period, and also if the National Assembly endorses the decision in its next session with two third votes of its members, the decision shall become effective and the president shall sign it.

Article ninetyseven : In consulation with the chairmen of House

of Representatives and the Senate, the Prime Minister and the Chief Justice, the President can declare the dissolution of the House of Representatives stating the reasons of justification

Re-elections shall be held within thirty days after the dissolution of the House of Representatives The new House of Representatives cannot be dissolved till one year after re elections

The House of Representatives cannot be dissolved during the last six months of office of the President

Article ninety eight : The laws and resolutions of the National Assembly shall be published in Pashtu and Dari languages and can be published in the languages of other nationalities of the country as well

Article ninetynine : The procedure of functioning of the National Assembly and its standing commissions shall be regulated by the National Assembly

CHAPTER SEVEN
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

"Article one hundred . The Council of Minister (Government) is the highest executive and administrative organ of state power in the Republic of Afghanistan

The Council of Ministers is composed of

—Prime Minister

—Deputy Prime Ministers

—Ministers, presidents of central organs equivalent to ministries

"Article one hundred and one The Prime Minister designate shall present to the first session of the House of Representatives the home and foreign policy line of the government and the composition of his government for seeking the vote of confidence and approval of the President, the Prime Minister shall present the domestic and foreign policy line and introduce members of the government to the Senate

Article one hundred and two · The Council of Ministers is responsible to the House of Representatives and the President and shall submit reports to them

Article one hundred and three · The Council of Ministers has the following duties and powers

1 Formulate and implement the domestic and foreign policies

2 Ensure the execution of matters relating to national economy, formulate the socioe conomic development plans, prepare the state

budget, implement plans and budget and report to the National Assembly on their execution.

3. Take measures for defending the interests of the state, protect all forms of legal properties, ensure public order and security and safeguard the rights and freedoms of the citizens.

4. Overall guidance of foreign relations, establishment of diplomatic ties and conclusion of agreements with foreign states and intenational organisations according to law.

5. Create offices and organs related to the Council of Ministers.

6. Other powers according to provisions of law.

The Council of Ministers of the Republic of Afghanistan approves regulations, rules and other legal documents in the jurisdiction of its powers.

Article one hundred and four : In the interval between session of the National Assembly and in the event of dissolution of the House of Representatives, the Council of Ministers may, if urgently required, issue legislative ordinances on matters within the powers of the National Assembly, excluding matters relating to budget and financial affairs. These legislative ordinances shall come into force after signature by the President.

The Council of Ministers shall submit to the first periodic session of the National Assembly for approval the legislative ordinances which are promulgated in accordance with the provisions of this Article. If the ordinances are rejected by the National Assembly, they become void from that date. In the interval between two sessions of the National Assembly or in the period of dissolution of the House of Representatives, the President may, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, appoint or dismiss any member of the government. The matter shall then be submitted to the first session of the Houses of Representatives to decide upon.

Article one hundred and five : The term of office of the Council of Ministers shall expire at the end of the legislative term of the House of Representatives.

The Council of Ministers shall carry on its activities till a new government is formed.

Article one hundred and six The organization, composition, and activities of the Council of Ministers shall be regulated by law.

CHAPTER EIGHT
JUDICIARY

Article one hundred and seven Judiciary is an independent

component of the state

Article one hundred and eight : Judgement in the Republic of Afghanistan shall be delivered only by a court in accordance with the provisions of law Courts in the Republic of Afghanistan include Supreme Court, provincial courts, divisional courts, district courts, city courts, subdistrict courts, precinct courts and military courts

The state may set up special courts within the unified system of judiciary

Article one hundred and nine : The Supreme Court, as the highest judicial organ heads the unified system of judiciary in the country and is composed of the chief justice, deputy chief justices and judges

The Supreme Court shall, in accordance with the provisions of law, supervise the activities of the courts and ensure the uniform application of law by courts

Article one hundred and ten : The Chief Justice, deputy chief justices and judges of Supreme Court shall be appointed by the President for a term of six years The Supreme Court is accountable to the President and shall report to him

Article one hundred and eleven : The courts shall be independent in their judgement and shall submit only to the law

Trial and verdict by courts shall be based on the principle of equality of parties before the law and the court

Article one hundred and twelve : The judges shall apply the provisions of the Constitution and the laws of the Republic of Afghanistan in the cases under their consideration When no explicit provision exists in the law, the court shall, following the provisions of the Shariat of Islam, render a decision that secures justice in the best possible way

Article one hundred and thirteen : Trial in the courts of the Republic of Afghanistan shall be held openly The conditions under which cases are to be conducted in closed trials shall be determinted by law

The verdict of the court shall be pronounced openly in all circumstances

Article one hundred and fourteen : The trial and judgement by the courts shall be conducted in Pashtu and Dari languages or in the language of the majority of the residents of the place If a party to the case does not understand the language in which the trial is conducted, he has the right to become acquainted, with the materials and documents of the case through an interpretor and the right to address the court in his mother tongue

Article one hundred and fifteen : The verdict by the court shall contain the statement of reasons and evidence.

The final verdict of the court is binding, except in the case of a death sentence which is executed after the approval of the President.

Article one hundred and sixteen : The organization, composition, powers and procedure of work of the courts shall be regulated by law.

CHAPTER NINE
ATTORNEY OFFICE

Article one hundred and seventeen : The Attorney Office of the Republic of Afghanistan is a unified system based on the principe of centralism and shall consist of :

Office of the Attorney General, provincial, divisional, district, subdistrict, city and precinct attroney offices and the attorney office of the armed forces.

The state can set up a special attorney office within the unified attorney system.

Article one hundred and eighteen : The Attorney General shall lead the activities of the attorney offices of the country.

The attorney offices are independent in the performance of their duties and are subject only to the law and the Attorney General.

Article one hundred and nineteen : The Attorney General and his deputies are appointed by the President for a term of six years.

The Attorney General is accountable to the President and shall report to him.

The Attorney General is accountable to the President and shall report to him.

Article one hundred and twenty : Highsupervision over the implementation and uniform observance of laws by the ministries and other central organs of state administration, executive committees of local councils, state, mixed and private institutions, departments, cooperatives, officials in charge and citizens shall be undertaken by the Attorney Genral and the Attorneys subordinate to him.

Article one hundred and twenty one : The organization, composition, powers and procedure of activity of the Attorney Office shall be regulated by law.

CHAPTER TEN
CONSTITUTION COUNCIL

Article one hundred and twentytwo : The Constitution Council of

the Republic of Afghanistan shall be formed to ensure the conformity of laws, other legislative documents and international treaties with the Constitution

Article one hundred and twentythree : The Constitution Council shall exercise the folowing powers

1 Evaluate the uniformity of laws, legislative decrees and international treaties with the Constitution

2 Give legal and judicial advice to the President on constitutional matters

Article one hundred and twentyfour : In order to exercise its powers the Constitution Council has the right to

1 Scrutinize the legislative documents presented for the President's signature and express opinion on their conformity with the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan

2 Submit concrete proposals to the President on measures regarding the development of legislative affairs as required by the Constitution

Article one hundred and twentyfive : The Constitution Council shall be composed of a chairman and eight members who are appointed by the President for a term of six years

Article one hundred and twenty seven : The organization and procedure of activity of the Constitution Council shall be regulated by law

CHAPTER ELEVEN
LOCAL COUNCIL

Article one hundred and twentyeight : For the purposes of local administration the Republic of Afghanistan is divided into provinces, divisions, districts, cities, subdistricts, precincts and villages

The organs of state power in the administrative units are their local councils

The executive organs of the local councils are the executive committees elected by the local councils of people's deputies The executive committees of local councils are led by governors of provinces, divisions and districts respectively as well as subdistrict administrators village chiefs, mayours and heads of precincts

Article one hundred and twentynine : Local organs of state power and administration shall deal with all problems relating to local administration, keeping in view the public interest

All local institutions, organisations and offices are duty bound to implement the decisions of the local councils and their executive committees.

Article one hundred and thirty : The term of office of local councils is three years.

Article one hundred and thirtyone : The organization, duties, powers, election procedure and activities of local councils shall be regulated by law.

CHAPTER TWELVE
FOREIGN POLICY

Article and hundred and thirtytwo : The foreign policy of the Republic of Afghanistan rests on ensuring the national interests, consolidation of independence and national sovereignty, territorial integrity of the country, preservation of world peace and security, peaceful coexistence, equality of rights and all-round development of international cooperation.

Article and hundred and thirtythree : The Republic of Afghanistan respects and observes the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other accepted principles and norms of international law.

Article one hundred and thirtyfour : The Republic of Afghanistan pursues the policy of non-alignment as a significant principle of the state's foreign policy and as one of the founders of the non-aligned movement strives for achieving its objectives.

Article one hundred and thirtyfive : The Republic of Afghanistan is in favour of establishing and consolidation of friendly relations with all countries, partiularly the neighbouring and Islamic ones, irrespective of their socio-political and economic systems, based on the principles of equality of rights, mutual respect of independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, non-resort to force or threat of use of force, denunciation of all forms of interference and aggression and sincere fulfilment of international commitments in accordance with the accepted principles and norms of international law.

Article one hundred and thirtysix : The Republic of Afghanistan supports the struggle of the peoples and antions for peace, national independence, democracy, social progress and the right of nations to self-dtermination and fights against colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism, Zionism, racism, apartheid and fascism.

Article one hudnred and thirtyseven : The Republic of Afghanistan supports the struggle for total disarmament, cessation of arms race on earth and in space, non proliferation and elimination of nuclear and chemical weapons and other kinds of weapons of mass destruction, dismantling of aggressive military bases, relaxation of international tensions and establishment of new and just international economic and information order

Article one hundred and thirtyeight : War propaganda is forbidden in the Republic of Afghanistan

CHAPTER THIRTEEN
MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Article one hundred and thirtynine : The Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan has the highest legal credibility Laws and other legislative documents shall be framed in conformity with it

Article one hundred and forty : The state and all its organs shall function on the basis of the Constitution and the laws of the Republicof Afghanistan and ensure legal order, interests of the society, rights and legal interests of the citizens State, cooperative, mixed and private institutions, political parties, social organisations, and officials in charge and citizens are obliged to observe the Constitution and the laws of the Republic of Afghanistan

Article one hundred and fortyone : Amendments of the Constitution shall be made amendements to the Constitution shall be on the proposal of the President or proposal of one third and approval of two third of the members of the National Assembly

In this case, the President convenes the Loya Jirgah If the Loya Jirgah finds the proposal qualified, it shall introduce the amendments in the Constitution, otherwise, it shall reject the proposal

Amendement of the Constitution in a state of emergency is not allowed

Article one hundred and fortytwo : Salaries of the President, Vice Presidents, members of the National Assembly, Prime Minister, members of the government, Chief Justice, judges of the Supreme Court, members of the Constitution Council, Attorney General and his deputies shall be fixed by law

Article one hundred and fortythree : Whenever the preservation of the independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity and internal security becomes impossible through the channels provided

for in this Constitution due to war, danger of war, disturbance or similar conditions, a state of emergency may be proclaimed by the President.

A state of emergency can be extended beyond three months only with the consent of the Loya Jirgah.

Article one hundred and fortyfour : The President shall have the following powers in a state of emergency.

1. Extension of the tenure of the National Assembly.
2. Delegation of power of the National Assembly in part to the Council of Ministers.
3. Delegation of powers of courts in part to special courts and military courts.
4. Suspension and or limitation of Article 30, 44, 45, 46, 49, 50 and the last item of article 51, articles 53 and 60 of the Constitution.
5. Exercise of other powers in accordance with the law.

Article one hundred and fortyfive : International treaties previously entered into by the Republic of Afghanistan and conventions joined by it, if found repugnant to the provisions of the laws of the Republic of Afghanistan, shall have ascendancey.

Article one hundred and fortysix : On the enactment of this Constitution and the election of the President, the Presidium of the Revolutionary Council shall be dissolved.

The Revolutionary Council shall carry on its duties till the National Assembly is constituted and shall enjoy the powers enshrined in chapter six of the Constitution. The National Assembly shall be constituted within six months following the enactment of the Constitution.

The Council of Ministers enjoying the powers described under chapter seven of the Constitution shall carry on its duties till a new government is formed and wins the vote of confidence of the House of Representatives as per provisions of the Constitution.

Article one hundred and fortyeight : On the enactment of this Constitution, the Fundamental Principles of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan shall be abrogated.

The laws and other legislative documents adopted prior to the enactmentof this Constitution shall remain valid, provided they are not repugnant to the provisions of this Constitution.

Article one hundred and fortynine : This Constitution shall come into force from the date of its endorsement by the Loya Jirgah and shall be signed and proclaimed by the President.

Appendix II

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF ALL PARTIES ON NATIONAL RECONCILIATION POLICY OF AFGHANISTAN JUNE 22, 1987 NEW DELHI

Organised by the Capital Foundation Society and The Indo-Afghan Friendship Society.

RESOLUTION

The National Conference of all Parties warmly welcomes the dialectically sound and compassionately just policy of the P D P A as the cornerstone of Peace Progress and Stability for Ariana country

Whereas India and Afghanistan have had historic ties on many dimensions and our current relations cultural, political and other are excellent, government to government and people to people, this Conference, convinced of the wisdom of the policy of National Reconciliation of Afghanistan, not only wishes this policy success but urges upon all governments in this Asian region to help in the activised progress of the process

Realising the vital importance of a stable and progressive DRA and the message of the Saur Revolution as a factor for Asian Peace this Conference condemns the U S instigation of mujahideen movements, rebel intrusions, internal explosions, Pakistani aggressions and false international propaganda against the People's Government, Com Najib and the effectiveness of National Reconciliation

Appreciating the positive policy of India and its leadership in promoting the best understanding with Afghanistan and Delhi's efforts to interpret the Afghan policy to the world vis a vis the Soviet position and the hostile role of Pakistan and Iran, this Conference appeals to all the nations and people, international organisations and the United Nations to help, not hinder the restoration of peace and return of refugees to their homeland enjoying the generous terms and full protection of human rights offered by the Extra ordinary Supreme Commission for National Reconciliation

THIS CONFERENCE APPEALS TO THE MUJAHIDEENS TO COOPERATE AND

NEGOTIATE WITH THE AFGAN GOVERNMENT FOR THE RECONCILIATION, PEACE AND PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLE OF AFGHANISTAN.

This Conference, being of the view that all sections of the Afghan people including the opposition elements must cooperate to make national reconciliation and national reconstruction a great success, desires to appeal to the comity of nations to accelerate the process of victory for the people. In this behalf an International Conference geared to the goal of making the National Reconciliation policy of the D.R.A. a meaningful historical event is a necessity and Delhi is the most appropriate venue. We constitute a Committee for the purpose of taking steps to organise the Conference with the support and goodwill of the Government of India and friendly nations of Asia and beyond. The members of the Committee shall be Shri R.L. Bhatia (Convenor), Shri Ramesh Bhandari, Shri Harkishan Singh Surjit, Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer, Shri H.N. Bahuguna, Shri M. Farooqi, Shri G.L. Dogra, Shri Faroukh Abdullah and Dr Vinod Sethi.

Appendix III

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN.

Organised by Capital Foundation Society and Indo-Afghan Friend ship Society

RESOLUTION

This Intenational Conference, having discussed the developments in and about Afghanistan, deems it proper to express its satisfac tion at the hopeful notes of history which will give an opportynity to the people to shape their own destiny,

And warmly welcomes the creative and courageous policy of Na tional Reconciliation adopted by the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan under the dynamic leadership of President Najibullah

This Conferences notes with deep appreciation the flexible con stitutional changes, at once realistic and accommodative, in the light of the political pluralism extant in the country, giving a generous opportunity to Opposition, even rebel elements, to join the mainstream of the power process and strengthen the solidarity of the tribes and jirgas,

Profoundly congratulates Mr Gorbachev, the great Soviet leader and General Secretary of the U S S R on his bold and principled strategy of withdrawing the Soviet forces from Afghan territory on the solid basis of a responsive cooperation from the United States, Pakistan, Iran, the rebel groups and fundamentalist elements for the creation of a truely democtatic, autonomous, sovereign republic free from armed interference or external instigation,

Affirms its faith in the eventual success of the progressive, speedy and successful conclusion of the Geneva negotiations and in that behalf, appeals to world opinion, to the people and Government of the U S A , Pakistan, Iran, China, the tribesmen and political leaders of and on the borders of Afghan country, and of all intellectuals concerned with the peace and stability in Asia to support the irrever sible process of democracy and People's Power in Afghanistan

This Conference sends its greetings to the Afghan people and their leaders in particular to President Najibullah and wishes them suc cess in their struggle against religious foundamentalists, feudalists and agents of neoimperialists, convinced as the progressive interna-

tional community is about the invincibility of democratic march of the masses of the Afghan people towards a full, free life as a non-aligned nation, rid of tension, impregnable in its territorial integrity and intolerant of external interference in its internal affairs.

JUSTICE V.R.KRISHNA IYER DR VINOD SETHI

Unanimously adopted by the conference attended by representatives of 37 countries. Inaugurated by Shri Natwar Singh Minister of External Affairs and presided by Shri R.L. Bhatia President of Indo-Afghan Friendship Society.

Appendix IV

TASHKENT DECLARATION

MEETING BETWEEN DR NAJIBULLAH AND COM GORBACHEV

Joint Soviet Afghan Statement

A meeting between the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachev and the President of the Republicof Afghanistan, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan Dr Najibullah was held in Tashkent on April 7, 1988 Taking part in it were, Members of the Polit Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR Eduard Shevardnadze and the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan Rafik Nishanov

Mikhail Gorbachev and Najibullah exchanged views on the key moments of the international situation and studied in detail topical questions directly concerning the interests of their countries

They noted that the policy of national reconciliation consistently pursued by the Afghan leadership, its constructive position on questions of the political settlement is the only correct line that accords with the interests of the Afghan people, all of its neighbours and the interests of the entire international community

The sides confirmed loyalty to the old tradition of building relations between the USSR and Afghanistan on principles of equality, mutual respect, mutual advantage and non interference in internal affairs

As a result of the meeting Mikhail Gorbachev and Najibullah arrived at a common view on the following

First The Soviet Union and the Republic of Afghanistan will act in accordance with the statement published on February 8, 1988 These statements imparted a new impluse to the process of the political statement of the most complex conflict and made it possible to place negotiations on the plane of a practical solution

Second The General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and the President of Afghanistan believe that the last obstacles to concluding the agreements have now been removed thanks to constructive cooperation of all who are involved in the settlement, and favour their immediate signing

Both sides duly assess the role of the UN Secretary General and his personal representative Diego Cordovez

The Afghan President welcomes the readiness of the Soviet Union and the United States to act as guarantors of the Geneva accords

Third The Soviet Union and Afghanistan reaffirm that in the

event of the conclusion within the shortest period of the said agreements, the Afghanistan-USSR understanding that the Soviet troops will be withdrawn within the period fixed by these agreements, starting from May 15, 1988, will remain in force.

Fourth. The policy of national reconciliation makes it possible to settle the situation around Afghanistan, end the war and fratricide, establish peace throughout the country's territory and form a coalition government with the participation of all forces representing Afghanistan society, including those who are currently opposed to one another.

Fifth. The final status of their country among other states will be determined by the Afghans themselves and nobody but them. The Soviet Union reaffirms its support for President Najibullah's statement on Afghanistan as an independent, non-aligned and neutral state. It proceeds from the premise that the territory of that country or any of its part will never be used for purposes hostile to its neighbours with regard to which Afghanistan will continue a policy of goodneighbourly relations and cooperation. This equally applies to the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of India, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Soviet side backs the Afghan President's statement to the effect that Afghanistan's internal structure will rest on a multiparty system in the political field and on a multi-sectoral basis in the economic sphere.

Sixth. It is of key importance for implementing the policy of national reconciliation to create satisfactory conditions for the return of Afghan refugees who are temporarily in the territory of Pakistan and other countries and grant them rights on an equal basis with all citizens of the country. The Soviet Union will extend assistance to Afghanistan in creating such conditions.

Seventh. The Soviet Union, relying on relations of traditional and historical friendship, expresses the readiness to cooperate with Afghanistan at high level in order to restore the economy and facilitate the economic and social development of the Republic of Afghanistan.

Eighth. The General Secretary and the President call on other states to contribute to establishing peace and national reconciliation in Afghanistan and respect the Geneva accords. This would set a good and encouraging example for resolving other regional conflicts.

Appendix V

GENEVA ACCORD

APRIL 14, 1988

The text of the Afghan peace accord which was signed by Pakistan, Afghanistan, The United States And The Soviet Union

Bilateral Agreement between The Republic of Afghanistan and The Islamic Republic of Pakistan on The Principles Of Mutual Relations, Particularly on Non-Interference and Non-Intervention :

The Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, hereinafter referred to as *THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES,* desring to normalise relations and promote good neighbourliness and co-operation as well as to strengthen international peace and security in the region,

Considering that full observance of the principle of non-interference and non-intervention in the internal and external affairs of states is of the greatest importance for the maintenance of international peace and security and for the fulfilment of the purposes and principles of the Charter of The United Nations,

Reaffirming the inalienable right of states freely to determine their own political, economic, cultural and social systems in accordance with the will of their peoples, without outside intervention, intererence, subversion, coercion or threat in any form whatsoever.

Mindful of the provisions of the charter of the United Nations as well as the resolutions adopted by the United Nations on the Principle of non-interference and non-intervention, in particular the declaration on principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation among states in accordance with the charter of the United Nations, of 24 october 1970, as well as the declaration on the inadmissibility of intervention and interference in the internal affairs of states, of 9 December 1981. have agreed as follows:

Article-I

Relations between the high contracting parties shall be conducted in strict compliance with the principle of non-interference and non-intervention by states in the affairs of other states.

for the Purpose of implementing the principle of non-interference and non-intervention each high contracting party undertakes to comply with the following obligations.

(1) to respect the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity, national unity, security and the national identity and cultural heritage of its people.

(2) to respect the sovereign and inalienable right of the other high contracting party freely to determine its own political, economic, cultural and social systems, to develop its international relations and to exercise permanent sovereignty over its natural resources, in accordance with the will of its people, and without outside intervention, interference, subversion, coercion or threat in any form watsoever.

(3) to refrain from the threat or use of force in any form whatsoever so as not to vigolate the boundaries of each other, to disrupt the political, social or economic order of the other high contracting party, to overthrow or change the political system of the other high contracting party or its government, or to cause tension between the high contracting parties.

(4) to ensure that its territory is not used in any manner which would violate the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and unity or disrupt the political, economic and social stability of the other high contracting party,

(5) to refrain from armed intervention, subversion, military occupation or any other form of intervention and interference, overt of covert, directed at the other high contracting party, or any act of military, political or economic interference in the internal affairs of the other high contracting party, including acts of reprisal involving the use of force.

(6) to refrain from any action or attempt in whatever form or under whatever pretext to destablise or to undermine the stability of the other high contracting party or any of its institutions.

(7) to refrain from the promotion, encouragement or support, direct or indirect, or rebellious or secessionist activities against the other high contracting party, under any pretext whatsoever, of from any other action which seeks to disrupt the unity or to undermine or subvert the political order or the other high contracting party.

(8) to prevent within its territory the training, equipping, financing and recruitment of mercenaries from whatever origin for the purpose of hostile activities against the other high contracting

party, or the sending of such mercenaries into the territory of the other high contracting party and accordingly to deny facilities, including financing for the training, equipping and transit of such mercenaries

(9) to refrain from making any agreement or arrangements with other states designed to intervene or interfere in the internal and external affairs of the other high contracting party

(10) to abstain from any defamatory campaign, vilification or hostile propanganda for the purpose of interfering in the internal affairs of the other high contracting party.

(11) to prevent any assistance to or use of or tolerance of terrorist groups, saboteurs or subversive agents against the other high contracting party

(12) To prevent within its territory the presence, harbouring, in camps and bases or otherwise, organising, training, financing, equipping and arming of individuals and political, ethnic and any other groups for the purpose of creating subversion, disorder or unrest in the territory of the other contracting party and accordingly also to prevent the use of mass media and the transportation of arms, ammunition and equipment by such individuals or groups

(13) not to resort to or to allow any other action that could be considered as interference or intervention

ARTICLE III The present agreement shall enter into force on 15 May 1988

ARTICLE IV any steps that may be required inorder to enable the high contracting parties to comply with the provisions of Article II of this agreement shall be completed by the date on which this agreement enter into force

ARTICLE V with a view to the orderly movement of the returness, the commissions shall determine frontier crossing points and establish necessary transit centres They shall also establish all other modalities for the phased return of refugees, including registration and communication to the country of return of the names of refugees who express the wish to return

ARTICLE VI at the request of the governments concerned, the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees will cooperate and provide assistance in the process of voluntary repatriation of refugees in accordance with the present agreement Special agreement may be concluded for this purpose retween UNHCR and the high contracting parties,

ARTICLE VII The present agreement shall enter into force on 15 May 1988. At that time The Mixed Commission provided in Article IV shall be established and the operations for the voluntary return of refugees under this agreement shall commence.

The arrangements set out in article IV and V above shall remain in effect for a perio of eighteen months. After that period the high contracting parties shall review the results of the repatriation and, if necessary, consider any further arrangements that may be called for.

ARTICLE VIII This agreement is drawn up in English, Pashtu, and Urdu languages, all texts being equally authentic in case of any divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

Done in five original copies at Geneva this fourteenth day of April 1988.

(signed by afghanistan and pakistan).

The documents were signed in the presence of UN Secretary General Javier Perez De Cuellar by Foreign Minister Zain Noorani of Pakistan, Abdul Wakil of Afghanistan and Eduard Shevardnadze of the Soviet Union and the United States Secretary of State George Shultz.